

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

THE BUDDHIST KINGS OF CHIENGMAI AND PEGU, THE PURIFICATION  
OF THE *SANGHA*, AND THE MAHABODHI REPLICAS IN THE LATE  
FIFTEENTH CENTURY

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## Introduction

In the late fifteenth century two similar and interesting events took place. Two Southeast Asian kings, both claiming to be Buddhist world rulers, built replicas of the Mahabodhi Temple in Bodhgaya, India. The first king was Dhammacetti (1462-1492) of Pegu, who built the Shwegugyi Temple in Pegu in 1479.<sup>1</sup> The other king was Tilokaraja (1441-1487), of Chiengmai, who began building the Wat Cet Yot in 1455 (although the building went on for over a decade).<sup>2</sup> Both the Shwegugyi and the Wat Cet Yot are replicas of the Mahabodhi temple at Bodhgaya, India,<sup>3</sup> in their general architectural design, their use of the seven stations in their layout, and their association with the bodhi tree.

The Mahabodhi temple is important to Buddhism, because it was built next to the bodhi tree under which the Buddha sat when he was enlightened. The seven stations at that temple refer to the seven different sites where the Buddha spent each of the seven weeks after enlightenment. This means that the Mahabodhi temple, the bodhi tree, and the seven stations there are directly tied to the foundation of the *sasana* and to the purity of the *sasana*. The construction of the two Mahabodhi replicas is even more interesting because only two other replicas of the Mahabodhi were built in Southeast Asia, one in Pagan built in 1215 by Nadaunmya

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1. See picture in Appendix I.

2. See picture in Appendix II.

3. See picture in Appendix III.

(Htilominlo),<sup>4</sup> and a minor one at Chiengrai, which cannot be dated or attributed.<sup>5</sup>

It is difficult to find out, however, why two kings in neighboring areas built Mahabodhi replicas at about the same time and why such replicas were not built in Southeast Asia for the 250 years before this time or at anytime afterwards.<sup>6</sup> The chronicles and inscriptions explain that Tiloka and Dhammacetti were performing meritorious acts by building the Mahabodhi replicas. The chronicles and inscriptions also claim that these two kings were trying to unify and purify the *sangha* in their lands. However, the chronicles and inscriptions do not say why Mahabodhi replicas were built by Dhammacetti and Tilokaraja around the same time and not by every king before and after who tried to gain merit or be a *dharmaraja* by purifying and uniting the *sangha*. I think it is important to find the underlying reasons for the similar event occurring in Chiengmai and Pegu in the late fifteenth century.

I will try, using the information that is available, and general information regarding the social, political, commercial, religious, agricultural, and demographic trends of that period, to

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4. See picture in Appendix IV.

5. See A.B. Griswold, "The Holy Land Transported: Replicas of the Mahabodhi Shrine in Siam and Elsewhere," in Paranavitana Felicitation Volume, (Colombo: M.D. Gunasena & Co., Ltd., 1965): 211.

6. with the exception of the temple at Chiengrai which cannot be dated.

provide the best possible answer to the questions (1) why the Mahabodhi replicas in Chiengmai and Pegu were built, (2) why they were built in these two places and not somewhere else, and (3) why they were built at this time.

My argument, which I will develop and explain more fully below, is that the most significant factor in the adoption of Mahabodhi replicas and the repurification of the *sangha* in late fifteenth century Chiengmai and Pegu was international trade. During the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, mainland Southeast Asia was politically (small and numerous states) and religiously (small and numerous sects) divided and not many kings had the resources or power to prove their claims of being dhammarajas by unifying or purifying the *sangha* or support the construction of temples on the same scale as Pagan. During the same period, however, trade grew as did agricultural cultivation and the population). By the late fifteenth century, central kings gained money for religious patronage of the *sangha* and for political patronage of (and more prestige in the eyes of) local rulers and probably better control of their kingdoms outside of the capital. The links that Chiengmai and Pegu had with international trade also brought ideas for rulers and monks. The religious reform and the building of Mahabodhi replicas of the late fifteenth century in Pegu and in Chiengmai came from ideas, brought along trade routes (maritime and within Southeast Asia), strengthening the prestige of Sri Lanka as a center of pure Buddhism. Also, Buddhist monks travelling along Southeast Asian



trade routes seem to have spread beliefs in the royal capitals (as trade centers) that religious reform should also include a replica of the Mahabodhi temple. The monks who took advantage of these ideas won the support of the central ruler over rival sects since they had a better claim to religious purity. The central kings had more resources and control than their predecessors over their kingdoms and could make the selection of a particular sect and the religious repurification more significant throughout the kingdom. Finally, to reinforce their image as *dhammarajas* who unified and purified the *sangha*, and as *cakravartins* or world Buddhist rulers, Dhammacetti and Tilokaraja tried to replace Pagan with their own capitals as the chief center of Buddhism (which meant that their capitals also had to have Mahabodhi replicas).

## CHAPTER I

### KINGS, MONKS, and CHAOS

In this chapter, I will examine the roles of Theravada Buddhist kings at the beginning of the early modern period (the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries). Further, I will examine their relationship with the *sangha* and how this relationship was increasingly affected by a growing view in mainland Southeast Asia, particularly in what is today Burma and Western Thailand, of universal political and religious chaos. Soon, the *sangha* and the kings blamed each other, and this prepared both sides to take steps to solve the situation.

#### A. The King as *Dhammaraja* and *Cakravartin*

A Theravada Buddhist ruler in Southeast Asia, as a *dhammaraja*, had several responsibilities that are related to my argument. The *dhammaraja* set a moral example for his subjects, contributing the most to the *sangha*, seeing after the *sangha*' well-being and protecting the Buddhist religion from its enemies.<sup>7</sup> One of the most important responsibilities was also for the *dhammaraja* to provide order, political and religious, out of chaos and to preserve that order once accomplished.

In the king's relationship with the *sangha*, he had additional roles. An important role was purifying the *sangha*. Buddhism was said to last five thousand years, and to make certain that it would, the king had to make certain that the *sangha* was practicing

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7. Michael Aung-Thwin, Pagan: the Origins of Modern Burma, (Honolulu, Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 1985): 57-8.

the religion properly. If he felt that it was not, he would purify it from time to time. Otherwise, if the religion were not being properly taken care of, this would be reflected in natural disasters, including droughts and famines, and the king would be viewed as not ruling with justice and could not be a *dharmaraja*.<sup>8</sup> Finally, the *dharmaraja* was permitted to engage in foreign conquests in order to protect the Buddhist religion, retrieve holy relics, and to spread Buddhism. He did this in his role as a *cakravartin*, or world ruler.<sup>9</sup> Most Buddhist kings of early Southeast Asia probably saw themselves as potential world rulers and tried to support and protect the *sangha* and ensure that it was pure and orthodox. Many of these kings, would have sponsored the building of many temples, would have purified a Buddhist sect, and would have unified the *sangha* in their lands according to the new ordination. Buddhist kings would have tried to show as much as possible, through their support of the *sangha*, that they really were *dharmarajas* and *cakravartins*. In Pagan times, the Burmese believed that the Mahavihara sect in Sri Lanka was the closest to maintaining the purity and orthodoxy of the *sasana*. To purify the *sangha*, the king would send a mission to Sri Lanka to have a group of monks reordained and then these monks would come back and

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8. Michael Aung-Thwin, *Pagan*, 58-9, 60.

9. S. J. Tambiah, *World Conqueror and World Renouncer: A Study of Buddhism and Polity in Thailand Against a Historical Background*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976): 46, 52-53; Michael Aung-Thwin, *Pagan*, 60-61.

reordain the monks in his own kingdom.<sup>10</sup>

The fifteenth century may generally have been seen as an important opportunity to fulfill this role, and thus enhance a successful Theravada Buddhist king's legitimacy as ruler. By the mid-fourteenth century, many things had changed in mainland Southeast Asia. The classical states in Southeast Asia had fallen or were falling apart, a large number of small Tai states had developed in many areas around Burma and in the Menam river valley, and no great state paralleling the old classical states in geographical size, population, or prestige had taken their place. The reasons for the collapse of the classical states and the rise of so many smaller states in their place are still debated by scholars of Southeast Asia, whose explanations range from internal theories to external theories, to a combination of both internal and external causes.<sup>11</sup> I cannot discuss these theories in depth

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10. Kalyani Inscription. 39; Michael Aung-Thwin, Pagan. 145.

11. A good example of internal theories of collapse of the classical states can be found in Michael Aung-Thwin, Pagan: the Origins of Modern Burma, in which he generally argues that the king could not remove himself from a system in which he was required to donate to the sangha his precious resources of ricelands and people—when there were no more lands that could be opened up, the balance of resources in the kingdom continued to move towards the tax-free sangha and the king lost his tax revenues. A good example of external theories is the theory of Rhoads Murphey, who argues that the anopheles mosquito brought malaria to Ceylon and the Southeast Asian classical states after foreign invasions prevented people from keeping the irrigation systems from working for a period of time in Rhoads Murphey, "The Ruin of Ancient Ceylon," Journal of Asian Studies 16, no. 2 (February, 1957): 183-200; Another

here, I just want to explain that for whatever reason, as much fourteenth century mainland Southeast Asia was politically fragmented.

Mainland Southeast Asia was also becoming religiously fragmented. Melford Spiro explains that as early as 1190, sects developed in the *sangha* over the issue of the proper ordination. At that time, Buddhist monks divided into the *Maramma Sangha*, monks ordained in Burma, and the *Sinhala Sangha*, whose monks were ordained in Sri Lanka. Spiro explains that from that time on the monkhood continued to split and "the rivalry among them increased in intensity, while their knowledge of the canon decreased

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Ceylon," Journal of Asian Studies 16, no. 2 (February, 1957): 183-200; Another good example of an external theory is offered by David P. Chandler for the case of Angkor, who argues that changing international trade led Angkorian rulers to withdraw from Angkor and the political center of gravity in the Angkorian region then shifted to the east. He makes this argument more recently in Ian w. Mabbett & David P. Chandler, The Khmers, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995): 216-217; A theory that falls between the internal and external theories is the theory of Charles Higham, who argues that just as the Thai states such as Ayuidhya began to expand and take territory from Angkor, within Angkor, there had been a religious change in which Hinduism and "mystical high Buddhism" was replaced by "the more democratic and universally popular Hinayana Buddhism" which did not require the "need for a sacerdotal apparatus and monumentality in religious expression." See Charles Higham, The Archaeology of Mainland Southeast Asia. From 10,000 B.C. to the Fall of Angkor, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989): 354. The external, internal, and combination theories have many more representatives, but the list is too long for me to discuss them all.

commensurately."<sup>12</sup> Also, the general picture that I have, from the chronicles, of the *sangha* in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries in mainland Southeast Asia is of many competing sects or branches of sects, and each group trying to prove that it was more pure than the other sects. The chronicles speak of this period as one in which the *sangha* is 'confused' and divided.<sup>13</sup> Since Burmese Buddhist monks do not take a 'vow of obedience' to the *sangha* and since what constitutes a sect seems to have included groups

so small that the possibility of

a vast number of new or sub branches was very great.<sup>14</sup>

I think that the political fragmentation caused by the collapse of the classical states also helped increase *sangha* division for several reasons, first, there were many

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12. Melford E. Spiro, Buddhism and Society; A Great Tradition and Its Burmese Vicissitudes, (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1970): 317-318.

13. Buddhism in Chiangmai during this reign was confused. "Regarding the *sangha* members, they were afflicted with disputes on many occasions." Padaeng Chronicle, in Sao Saimong Mangrai (ed. & trans.), The Padaeng Chronicle and the Jenqtung State Chronicle Translated, (Ann Arbor, Michigan: the University of Michigan, Center for South & Southeast Asian Studies, 1981): 105. I will refer to this chronicle from now on as 'Padaeng Chronicle.'

14. Melford Spiro explains of the Buddhist sects that "the disagreements between them have usually been based on minor differences in monastic discipline." Also, Spiro says that the "differences among them included such matters as the consecration of an ordination hall and the character of the ordination ceremony, each branch performing the ceremony in its own way." Melford E. Spiro, Buddhism and Society, 291, 317, 318.

states in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century,<sup>15</sup> instead of just a few large 'classical' states, such as Pagan or Angkor. As a result, when a king of one of the smaller states, purified the *sangha*, it did not have the same region-wide effect or affect as many monks as it would have in Pagan and many old or rival sects probably continued to exist. Also, the central kings of the new kingdoms may not have had the same prestige within their kingdoms (or influence over local rulers) that kings had in Pagan. Some of the fourteenth and fifteenth century kings, for example, had so little influence outside of the capital that when they drove out a rival sect to the royally-supported sect, the exiled sect continued to live in the vassal-towns of the kingdom.<sup>16</sup>

Second, since these states were always fighting, expanding, and contracting, there was an religious instability since the *sangha* of a local area was probably subject to different kings periodically. Since to get royal recognition then as the pure sect, a monk had to be reordained and join a different and already established sect, he would probably be given a much lower rank in the *sangha* hierarchy than the place he had previously held in the

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15. Victor Lieberman has compiled a list of 22 of these states, on the basis that they did not pay tribute to anyone else. Victor Lieberman, "Local Integration and Eurasian Analogies: Structuring Southeast Asian History, c. 1350-c. 1830," *Modern Asian Studies* 27, no. 3 (1993): 480, ft. 8. Also, there were probably many more states of nearly independent power.

16. Alexander B. Griswold's letter to Sao Saimong Mangrai in the introduction to *Padaeng Chronicle*, 40.

old hierarchy, and there is evidence of these disputes over losing rank in the *sangha* hierarchy due to reordination in this period.<sup>17</sup>

Third, many of the kings of this period were from animist origins (such as the Shans) and in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries these rulers may have been only superficially Buddhist. As 'superficially' Buddhist rulers, I do not think that they would have understood the religious reasons for, or would really have cared too much about, establishing one 'pure' Buddhist sect. The Jinakalamalipakaranam describes King Tissa of Chiengmai as a king who patronized both Buddhism and 'demons,' like this:

He who was of little faith in the Dispensation but possessing (much) faith in external systems, without betaking himself to the virtuous, greatly honoured the votaries of the demons. That King worshipped wooded groves, trees, heaped mounds, rocks and forests with offerings such as cattle and buffaloes. In his own domains where he held sway, and in the various ports of call there lived many folk who were generally known as the votaries of the demons... And he set apart fields and other lands for the procuring of requisites for [a] great monastery and gifted them. Throughout his kingdom too, he set apart fields and other lands in honour of the Buddha (-images) and other holy objects situated at various places and gifted them.<sup>18</sup>

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17. PadaengChronicle, 106.

18. Translation in N. A. Jayawickrama (trans.), The Sheaf of Garlands of the Epochs of the Conqueror, being a translation of the Jinakalamalipakaranam of Ratanapanna Thera of Thailand, (London: for the Pali Text Society by Luzac & Co., Ltd., 1968): 128-129. From now on, I will refer to this simply as



Finally, some of these kings of this period, saw a unified *sangha* as a threat, because the Buddhist *sangha* had a organized following. The ruler of Ava, Thohanbwa (1527-43), for example, supposedly said:

[T]he monks have got no wife and children, they again maintain pupils and seek followers. If, when the monks have chosen followers, they might seize the kingship, and this being so, they will be able to capture the throne. It is fit to capture and kill the monks just now.<sup>19</sup>

With less royal interference in their affairs, no universal repurification of the *sangha* (across a major region), and the division of religious patronage in the kingdom due to the coexistence of rival sects (a king supported one, but his vassal rulers or other members of the royal family could support another), the monks of any given sect could respond in several ways. Sometimes, monks would go as pioneers, remaining loyal to their

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& Co., Ltd., 1968): 128-129. From now on, I will refer to this simply as Jinakalamalipakaranam.

19. Translation of Hsaya Maungdaung Pannasamisirikavidhaja's Sasanavamsa in Bimala Churn Law (trans.), The History of the Buddha's Religion (Sasanavamsa), (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1986): 106. From now on, I will refer to this simply as Sasanavamsa: This story is also told in George E. Harvey, History of Burma From the Earliest Times to 10 March 1824, The Beginning of the English Conquest, (New York: Octagon Books, 1967): 107.

sect and establishing new branches in other kingdoms. This was how the Garden Sect spread. This sect known as Sondok sect, or 'Garden of Flowers' sect [or just Garden Sect],<sup>20</sup> was established in Chiangmai when King Klina Sondokgham built Vat Sondokgham for the monk, Sumana.<sup>21</sup> This was the 'Old Ceylon' sect. It developed first at Martaban, then at the Mango Grove Monastery at Sukhodaya and the Red Forest Monastery at Sajjanalaya, then at Wat Pra Yun at Lamphun and the Flower Garden at Chiangmai.<sup>22</sup>

Whole sects of monks also went from one area to another until they found a royal patron who could afford them. A good example of this is the Padaeng sect [Red Forest sect] which was known as Rattaram in Pali.<sup>23</sup> It was the 'New Ceylon' sect, whose main representative was the Red Forest Monastery.<sup>24</sup> This sect began from a group of monks from Chiangmai who were reordained in Sri Lanka,

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20. Also related to this sect are Puppharam [monastery of flowers] and Yang-gong [a name of a monastery of the Garden Sect]. Sao Saimong Mangrai's notes to Padaeng Chronicle, 31.

21. Sao Saimong Mangrai's notes to Padaeng Chronicle, 31.

22. Mulasasana is mainly an account of this sect. Alexander B. Griswold's letter to Sao Saimong Mangrai, in the introduction to Padaeng Chronicle, 39.

23. Related to this is the Great Forest, or Mahana sect. Sao Saimong Mangrai's notes to Padaeng Chronicle, 31.

24. Jinakalamanipakaranam is mainly the history of this sect. Alexander B. Griswold's letter to Sao Saimong Mangrai in the introduction to Padaeng Chronicle, 39.

when the party of monks came back to Southeast Asia, they landed first at the court of Ayudhya,<sup>25</sup> then went to Sajjanalaya, then in 1430, they reached Chiengmai,<sup>26</sup> and from there they moved on as a whole sect to Chiengmai's vassal states of Möngyöng, Möngbeng, and Mönglaem, and to Sipsöngbanna.<sup>27</sup> In 1432, however, the Jinakalamalipakaranam records that when these monks went to the city of Khelanga [Lampang] where they received now the active support of "the great minister Sura, the governor of the city of Khelanga, who sacrificed his life of luxury for their sake, they performed the first act of higher ordination...to the north-east of the city.<sup>28</sup> And later, they returned to Chiengmai, received patronage from a royal prince and a royal aunt, and began giving new ordinations throughout the region around Chiengmai.<sup>29</sup>

Sometimes a sect fragmented and members would go off to found new sects elsewhere. The establishment of hierarchies within a *sangha* sect, for example, was difficult, since it caused disagreements between who had been ordained first and often caused a complete division of a particular *sangha* sect. In one case, for

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25. Padaeng Chronicle, 111; Jinakalamalipakaranam describes this as well. Jinakalamalipakaranam, 131.

26. Jinakalamalipakaranam, 130-131.

27. Sao Saimong Mangrai's notes to the Padaeng Chronicle, 31.

28. Jinakalamalipakaranam, 131.

29. Jinakalamalipakaranam, 132-3.

example, Maha Sundara had monks ordained in two different *sima* (ordination) boats:

When their business was over, [the monks] later quarreled bitterly, saying, 'I ascended (the *sima* boat) before you; you ascended it only later.' some honored the old seniority; some honored the new seniority; no one obeyed anyone, (each acted) according (to) his heart's desire, creating many patterns, many methods until the present time, a painful spectacle to those endowed with the wisdom-eyes who saw the happenings while helping to receive the offerings to the sangha.<sup>30</sup>

The movement of strange monks and sects of monks into new areas was sometimes perceived as a threat by local sects of monks. In some cases, the local sect then persuaded the local ruler to scare new monks away. In one case, for example, mentioned in the Padaeng Chronicle, after being asked by the local *sangha*, a king incited the 'people' against the newcomer monks and then physically drove them away.<sup>31</sup> In 1430, the arrival of monks of the 'New Sihala' sect angered members of the old Sihala sect who

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30. Padaeng Chronicle, 106.

31. "the lords of [Ayudhya] who were ordained in [Sri Lanka] came up to [Chiengmai] for a visit at the time Lord Maha Nanaramsi was in residence, intending to destroy the Sangha by urging them to adopt their doctrine...The braya made people argue with them but could not beat them. The braya was angry and drove them away." [105]; "On one occasion, Buddhafiana kept bandits (who) later went on to steal; the population censured (him) greatly—Braya Saenmōng was displeased and drive (him) away." Padaeng Chronicle. 105.

believed that the new monks were too arrogant, too critical, and tooAamaging to their interests, and the king in 1432 drove the new Sihala sect away from Chiengmai. The New Sihala sect hid in Lamphang, Lampun in 1432, and in Chiengsen and Chiengrai from 1433 until 1441, all vassals of Chiengmai.<sup>32</sup> This is interesting because it may indicate that while the king of Chiengmai could physically push a sect out of his main city, he was not yet powerful enough to completely control religious matters in the towns of his vassals.

Generally, however, it looks like not many local sects could keep different sects away and in the same general region (although often not the same town) there were probably several sects competing for patronage from the same king. Since the existence of several sects did not solve the problem of the local ruler's ability to support the *sangha*, the competition between sects for royal patronage was important. This competition seems to have been characterized by proving to the local ruler the orthodoxy of their own sect, and trying to show that rival sects were impure. The Padaeng Chronicle records, for example, that:

[the monks] of [Ayudhya] who were ordained in [Sri Lanka] came up to [Chiengmai] for a visit at the time Lord Maha Nanaramsi was in residence, intending to destroy the Sangha by urging them to adopt their doctrine with the words: 'It is not good to carry staffs; it is good not to carry staffs; not good to

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32. Alexander B. Griswold's letter to Sao Saimong Mangrai in the introduction to Padaeng Chronicle, 40.

carry silver and gold; not to carry, good.'<sup>33</sup>

Nanagambhira, a fourteenth century Chiengmai monk, claimed that the previous ordination of his sect was wrong because it was not in accordance with the 'Vinaya in Pali laid down by the Lord Buddha.'<sup>34</sup> A student had a disagreement with his teacher, Dhammakitti, after being ordained by him. As a result of this ordination, the disgruntled student "ran away to be ordained at the residence of Candavanijicon" in Sri Lanka "and returned to censure the Sangha who said that he was no ascetic."<sup>35</sup> The competition between sects of monks and the need to prove that each was more pure than the other may explain why so many fifteenth century Burmese, Mon, and Thai monks were sponsoring missions to Sri Lanka on their own, without royal support. Without sponsorship of kings and acting on their own, Buddhist monks at this time travelled from Chiengmai to Ayudhya to Sri Lanka <sup>36</sup> and back again.<sup>37</sup> The Sasanavamsa says that in 1400, two elders, Dhammagambhira and Medhamkara "with many monks, went to the island of Sihala from the

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33. PadaengChronicle, 105.

34. PadaengChronicle, 107.

35. PadaengChronicle, 106.

36. PadaengChronicle. 107.

37. PadaengChronicle. 105.

Yonaka country."<sup>38</sup> Later, the monks went to the town of Sokkata [Sukodaya] and then the monks went on to the city of Lakunna. When the monks from Chiengmai in 1423 went to Sri Lanka for the new ordination, they met there six monks from Rammanya.<sup>39</sup>

In 1423, because of the increasing fragmentation of the region's *sangha*, thirty-three monks, from both Chiengmai and Kamboja, met together in Chiengmai on their own (without royal patronage) and discussed how to find a purer ordination for the *sangha*. The Jinakalamalipakaranam says that these monks came together for this purpose and discussed the matter only among themselves and does not mention any local ruler or patron calling this meeting or sponsoring it. Also, the Janakalamalipakaranam in its description of the subsequent mission to Sri Lanka, describes it as a monk-sponsored mission and again mentions no royal sponsor.<sup>40</sup> To summarize my point again, in this case we have a small group of monks coming from several areas of Southeast Asia, who decide to find a new, more pure ordination (and breaking with their former sects), and go to Sri Lanka for the proper ordination, without royal sponsorship, and then come back as a new sect, advertising its purity and then gaining royal patronage versus older sects in the region. The Jinakalamalipakaranam

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38. Sasanavamsa. 56.

39. Jinakalamalipakaranam, 130.

40. Jinakalamalipakaranam, 129.

records that these monks voted to get "the higher ordination of the Dispensation of the Teacher and plant it in our land."<sup>41</sup> They also wanted to emphasize the orthodoxy of their new ordination by bringing back from Sri Lanka Buddha images, the three pitakas, the new *sasana*, and most importantly, seedlings of the Mahabodhi tree.<sup>42</sup>

#### **B. Views of Disorder in the Fourteenth-Fifteenth Centuries**

The political and religious fragmentation was probably enough to suggest that fourteenth and early fifteenth century mainland Southeast Asia was in a state of chaos. But did the fourteenth and fifteenth century Southeast Asians see the world around them as disunified, and if so, who did they blame? We cannot know what the average person believed during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. But I can guess what they may have thought by looking at what they did and what other groups have written. One important indication of disorder and lack of security in their daily lives, is that beginning in the mid-fourteenth century and continuing on into the fifteenth century, Burmans from Upper Burma, began to flee Upper Burma because of Shan raids, and went to the area

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41. Jinakalamalipakaranam, 129.

42. PadaengChronicle, 111



around Toungoo.<sup>43</sup> Chronicles also record that both monks and kings of the fifteenth century believed that the region had gradually fallen into complete disorder.<sup>44</sup> worst of all, from the perspective of both Buddhist monks and Buddhist kings, 'pagan' Shan rulers sometimes massacred Buddhist monks,<sup>45</sup> destroyed Buddhist temples, and burned religious texts.

Who did the kings and the *sangha* blame for the lack of political and religious unity? Judging by fifteenth century records, kings blamed the *sangha* and the *sangha* blamed the kings. A religious chronicle, the Sasanavamsa, for example, states that sometime after 1383, a Burmese king named Ma-nah-kri-cva-cok (Min-kyi-swa-sao-kei?) heard the monks ringing a bell and sent a messenger to ask them why they were doing this. In response to the messenger's questions, the monks said, "No monk among us has died.

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43. Paul J. Bennett, "The 'Fall of Pagan': Continuity and Change in 14th-century Burma," in Paul Bennett J., Conference Under the Tamarind Tree: Three Essays in Burmese History. (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Program, 1971): 28; Than Tun, "History of Burma 1300-1400," in Paul Strachan (ed.), Essays on the History and Buddhism of Burma by Professor Than Tun, (Whiting Bay, Scotland: Kiscadale Publications, 1988): 112.

44. Sasanavamsa, 99-100.

45. The Sasanavamsa records that from 1523 until 1526, that Sirihamsa, who took over the rule of Ava, slaughtered cows and buffalos to force-feed the neighboring monks, and after gathering the monks from Jayapura, vijayapura, and Ava, he had them all massacred, amounting to 3,000 dead monks. Then, this ruler had the Buddhist books burned and the Buddhist temples destroyed. Sasanavamsa, 106.

Sakka the king of the gods is now dead, and to make it known to many people we struck the drum."<sup>46</sup> When the king sent for the monks and asked them how they know that "Sakka the king of the gods is dead?" they replied:

Although Sakka the king of the gods had made the promise at the time of the demise of the Blessed One: 'I will protect the religion,' he did not do anything to protect us who now follow the religion. But had Sakka the king of the gods been alive, he would not have been careless now, after making his promise boldly before the Supremely Enlightened Buddha. But now there is nothing visible as to the work of protection by Sakka the king of the gods. So we knew that Sakka the king of the gods was now dead.<sup>47</sup>

I think that what this view indicates is that the monks felt that the kings, who in Burma is associated with Lord Sakka (who is Indra), were not fulfilling their role on earth of protecting and providing for the *sangha* and the *sasana*. This view also carried into later court treatises, such as the Shweibon Nidan, which suggests that the link between Indra's role as protector of the

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<sup>46</sup>, Sasanavamsa, 99.

<sup>47</sup>. Sasanavamsa. 100; At another place in Sasanavamsa, in which they do not provide a year for the quote, a statement is given which I think indicates the meaning of the above quote more directly: "the religion, indeed, endures in this world under the patronage of the king. The wrong views of the king ruin the religion of the Master, but the right views of the king raise up the religion. And if it be so, it shines forth like the moon in the sky." Sasanavamsa, 106.

religion, and the association of Indra with Burmese kingship were important parts of royal legitimacy:

In the third level of a seven-tiered [palace] *pyathad*, on the west part of the north side, a complete hole is cut through to the interior. Thagyä's place is on Mount Myinmo [Mount Meru] in the north of the island of Zambudipa. When Thagyä came down from Mount Myinmo to take care of the people, he spread his power through a hole and that hole is called *Thagyä-pauk*. This is also the hole through which the king spreads his own power and glory and we call it, *min-poün-pauk*.<sup>48</sup>

A *Thagyä-youp* and the *hmandine* are placed in the *tuyin* mansion above the arch at the top of the throne. The reason is to remind the king of guarding religion and to look after the good people and to punish the bad ones and to be straightforward as himself. . . . To illustrate Thagyä admonishing the king [who says:] "Always take care of the state lawfully, look at the golden *hmandine* on my forehead," the *hmandine* is erected in front up to the top of Thagyä image's forehead [in the embellishments at the top of the throne]. Thagyä was entrusted with the guardianship of the *sasana* [religion] in accordance with his request to Lord Buddha at Kuthinayoun.<sup>49</sup>

From this perspective, then, the king was responsible for the

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48. This translation comes from U Saw Tun & Michael W. Charney (trans.), *The Shweibon Nidan*, forthcoming, p. 3. The Burmese text for this selection can be found in ဇေယသင်္ခယာ, ရွှေဘုံနိဒါန်း, (ရန်ကုန်မြို့, ဟံသာဝတီ ပုံနှိပ်တိုက်, 1963): 4-5.

49. U Saw Tun & Michael W. Charney (trans.), *The Shweibon Nidan*, p. 4-5. The Burmese text for this selection can be found in ဇေယသင်္ခယာ, ရွှေဘုံနိဒါန်း, 5-6.

well-being of the sasana, for protecting the good people, and for punishing the bad people. In short, it was the king's fault if the world was in chaos, and if injustice prevailed.

Some kings, however, claimed that it was the *sangha* that was at fault for the continuing world chaos. As Dhammacetti explained:

The excellent compilers of Atthakathas have declared that the Religion of Buddha will last 5,000 years; but alas! only 2,047 years have passed away since the Enlightened One attained Buddhahood, and the Religion has become impure, tainted with heresy and corruption, and the upasampada ordination has also become invalid. This being the case, how can the Religion last till the end of 5,000 years?...Being aware of the impurity, heresy, and corruption, that have arisen in the Religion...in order to ensure the continuance of the Religion to the end of the period of 5,000 years, it is essential that it should be purified by resuscitating the pure form of the upasampada ordination, 50

Dhammacetti listed some of his complaints of monks engaging in trade in goods they received as offerings, and other impure acts, in the Kalyani Inscription.<sup>51</sup> Finally, Dhammacetti specifically indicated his anger at the increasing number of Buddhist sects:

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50. King Dhammacetti, Kalyani Inscription, translated by Taw Sein Ko in Indian Antiquary (April, 1893): 38. I will refer to this from now on simply as Kalyani Inscription.

51. Kalyani Inscription, 86.

"Let there be a single sect! Let not diverse sects arise!"<sup>52</sup>

If we put the perspectives of both the kings and the monks of this time together, it seems that both the kings and the *sangha* saw each other as partners in maintaining the universal order: monks felt that kings were responsible for universal order by protecting the *sangha*, by maintaining a unified population, and by providing for the material needs of the *sangha*, and the kings felt that the *sangha* was responsible for the universal order by maintaining the correct religious rites and the proper ordination. It is probably true, then, that the *sangha* wanted a unified kingdom and the king wanted a unified *sangha*. I will try to explain in the next chapter, that the unification of kingdoms and Buddhist monks reformers made this happen in the last half of the fifteenth century.

### Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have examined the roles of Theravada Buddhist kings in their societies during the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Further, I have attempted to explain that the relationship between the local kings and the *sangha* was affected by a growing view in Burma and Chiangmai that the world and the *sasana* were in chaos. As a result, the *sangha* and the kings blamed each other for the world's political and religious fragmentation. In the next chapter, I will examine the flow of new trade

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52. King Dhammacetti, cited in Michael Aung-Thwin, Pagan: The Origins of Modern Burma, 146.

resources and ideas which soon characterized attempts by both the kings and the *sangha* to bring the world back into order.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **TRADE AND IDEAS**

I will try to accomplish several things in this chapter. First, I will attempt to answer why, in late fifteenth century Pegu and Chiengmai, centralizing kings suddenly committed to Sri Lanka-based Buddhist orthodoxy and why were Dhammacetti and Tilokaraja remembered as the great patrons of Buddhism in their kingdoms? In this chapter, I will also try to explain that by the second half of the fifteenth century, maritime and domestic trade which was helping central kings to increase the size and wealth of their kingdoms, and to strengthen their control a little more over their vassal rulers, also carried new ideas of Buddhist reform from overseas religious centers, like Sri Lanka and religious items, like miniature replicas of the Mahabodhi temple. I also want to explain that monks who probably followed regional trade routes (within Southeast Asia) contributed to a general belief in royal capitals of Southeast Asia of what 'pure' Buddhist orthodoxy was. Finally, I want to point out that the new or revived views of Buddhist orthodoxy came at a time when sects of monks were looking for better ways to 'advertise' that they were more 'pure' than rival sects and kings had enough resources to support the growth of this and related sects.

By the late fifteenth century, the numerous small kingdoms in mainland Southeast Asia were gradually replaced by larger kingdoms with greater populations, presumably greater agricultural

cultivation, and with more wealth from growing domestic trade.<sup>53</sup> As for greater populations and agricultural cultivation, these observations are suggested by several things. As I will explain in my examination of fifteenth century interior and maritime trade, increasing commercial connections and commodity extraction, production and trade may suggest increasing populations. Often, such activities also require increased agricultural production which would make handicrafts and commercial specialization possible. Also suggestive is the research by Tadayo Watanade, who has provided evidence for the spread of new strains of rice, in the Burmese and Tai areas from the eleventh to fifteenth centuries, which were longer growing, more nutritious, more productive, and also required increasingly sophisticated irrigation schemes. As Watanabe explains:

The glutinous wet rice is a fast-growing kind of rice and is like Japonica rice. On the other hand, Uruch-wet rice is a slow-growing indica, slender type of rice. The former can be grown, soaked in water, for a short period of time under native water fields or primitive soils. However, the latter has to be soaked in

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53. Victor Lieberman explains that, during the 1350-1800 period, these developments were gradually taking place. Victor Lieberman, "Local Integration and Eurasian Analogies," 475-572. I think that at least some of these developments must have taken place by the late fifteenth century, as I will explain a little later about increasing trade. David Wyatt also explains that by the 1450s in Thailand, all of the small states were replaced by three big ones—Lan Na, Ayudhya, and Lan Sang. David K. Wyatt, Thailand; A Short History, (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1984): 74.



the water for a longer period of time stably under more developed irrigated land. Under this developed irrigated land, the productivity of Uruchi wet rice is more than that of glutinous wet rice. When we consider the rapid increase of Uruchi wet type rice during the eleventh to fifteenth centuries, we can assume that there was an environmental change due to the production base. This environmental change might have been at least one cause for them to choose Uruchi wet type rice over glutinous wet type rice. Also, the centralization and the population growth in the central plateau might have been related to a large extent to the social background.<sup>54</sup>

The points that can be extrapolated from this, as concerns my thesis, are that (1) the ability to make use of this rice (indicated by its widespread use by the fifteenth century) reflects more widespread control of land necessary for extensive irrigation systems, (2) the need to make use of the new, more labor-intensive strains of rice may indicate a need for greater rice cultivation to feed increasing, and more occupationally specialized populations, and (3) the result of the use of these new strains of rice would probably be increasing demographic growth since this rice was healthier (more nutritious) and more productive.

#### **A. Increasing Inland Trade and Other Contacts**

As for increasing trade or commercial contacts, while actual

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54. See Tadayo Watanabe, Ajia Inasaku no Keihu, (Hosei: Hosei University Press, 1983): 93-4.

trade statistics are not available for this early period, there are records of numerous examples of domestic trade relationships, for which I have not found reference for earlier periods. For Lower Burma, for example, we have references to traders from Ablu<sup>55</sup> going on trade missions to Martaban and to Makaw (a trading center on the Pegu river ten miles or so to the West of Pegu).<sup>56</sup> There is also evidence of trade by Yunnanese Chinese Moslem traders in the northern Thailand area (that is, the area of Chiangmai) in the mid-1410s.<sup>57</sup> Whether or not Dhammacetti was correct when he made accusations against some monks, his references to monks spending their time in making tradeable goods indicates that at least somebody (a monk or a layman) had to be doing these things. Dhammacetti, for example, accused some monks who "procure their livelihood, like laymen...by means of...the manufacture of ivory articles, turnery, the making of idols, and such other vocations."<sup>58</sup> Dhammacetti also accused some monks of engaging in trade:

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55. This appears to be a town in Rammanya, but its exact location is uncertain.

56. The Nidana Ramadhipati-katha. for example, refers to various local traders who, during the reign of Dhammacetti, went from Ablu to Martaban, from Makaw to Ablu, and from Ablu to Makaw to trade. See Nidana Ramadhipati-katha, 14-15.

57. See Andrew D. W. Forbes, "The 'Cin-Ho' (Yunnanese Chinese) Caravan Trade with North Thailand During the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," Journal of Asian History 21, no. 1 (1987): 3. I am grateful to Laichen Sun for this reference.

58. Kalyani Inscription, 86.

There are priests, who visit cotton-fields and preach the Dhamma...and trade in cotton which they happen to receive as offerings...who visit fields of hill-rice, rice, barley, & c.,...and trade in the grain which they happen to receive as offerings...who visit fields of capsicum...and trade in the capsicum which they happen to receive as offerings.<sup>59</sup>

Another indication of growing domestic and inland trade comes from the inscriptions and from religious chronicles. First, in the late fifteenth century inscription, the Kalyani Inscription, it mentions that the mission sent by Dhammacetti, the king of Pegu, to Sri Lanka included the following goods [I will list only the goods here that I think are significant]:

22 carpets made of wool of Marammadesa [Upper Burma].  
 22 variegated Haribhunja [Chiengmai] betel-boxes, with covers.  
 20 betel-boxes "manufactured in Haribhunja."  
 8 painted pitcures "manufactured in Chinadesa [China]."  
 20 fans "manufactured in Chinadesa."  
 20 pieces of China cloth.<sup>60</sup>

From this list of gifts it seems that Pegu is getting trade goods from China [possibly from Yunnan]<sup>61</sup> and from the inland Southeast

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59. Kalyani Inscription, 86.

60. Kalyani Inscription, 41.

61. Anthony Reid says that Yunnan Muslim Chinese traders traded with Southeast Asia by going downriver with their silks and metalware. Anthony Reid, Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450-1680, Volume II, Expansion and Crisis, (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1993): 53, 60-1.

Asian producers, such as from Upper Burma and from Chiengmai.

The topic of Chinese trade and other connections with mainland Southeast Asia, for example, has been examined extensively by Sun Laichen. Sun has examined the patterns of tribute missions from Burmese and Shan kingdoms to the Chinese court over the precolonial period. What Sun found out was that a major peak in tribute missions occurred in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.<sup>62</sup> This seems to correlate to the findings of other scholars, such as Anthony Reid, who has observed the beginning of a maritime trade boom from c. 1400.<sup>63</sup> As Sun has explained, Ava sent sixteen tribute missions to China during the 1393-1414 period and Pegu sent five tribute missions during the 1407-1415 period. Even more interesting, the Chinese court sent twelve return missions to Ava (1371-1416) and "several" return missions to Pegu and Shan kingdoms.<sup>64</sup> While Sun argues that the tribute missions were "politically motivated," it does support the point that I am making here, that there was increasing regional interaction from the late fourteenth-early fifteenth centuries involving Pegu and other areas of Burma (and likely Chiengmai as well). Further, Laichen describes the exchange of luxury commodities as part of this diplomatic interaction, including

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62. Sun Laichen, "Burmese Tributary and Trade Relations with China Between the Late Thirteenth and Eighteenth Centuries," 3. This is an unpublished ms. in the possession of the author.

63. Anthony Reid, Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450-1680. II, 10.

64. Sun, "Burmese Tributary and Trade Relations with China Between the Late Thirteenth and Eighteenth Centuries," 3.

silks, gauze, yarn, silver, among other goods.<sup>65</sup> Further, Sun explains that the Chinese-Burmese exchange of tribute missions continued from the 1420s until 1504, when they stopped abruptly due the beginnning of the decline of the Ming dynasty in China.<sup>66</sup> For the purposes of this thesis, then, Sun's work makes clear that the fifteenth century saw extensive interaction, involving diplomatic and commodity exchange between China and the Burmese, Mon, and Shan kingdoms (such as Chiengmai).

Additionally, one may suggest that the extensive inland trade connections that in throughout the sixteenth century tied Pegu and Chiengmai (Jangoma) with each other and to Upper Burma, Ayudhya, and China could not have developed suddenly, and were probably the result of a long-term process of inland trade growth in this area of mainland Southeast Asia. Evidence for these inland trade connections comes chiefly from contemporary and near-contemporary European trade accounts,<sup>67</sup> especially Tome Pires' Suma Oriental. Pires describes, for example, interior trade between the lower mainland kingdoms of Pegu and Ayuhdya and Upper Burma as follows:

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65. Sun, "Burmese Tributary and Trade Relations with China Between the Late Thirteenth and Eighteenth Centuries," 4-5.

66. Sun, "Burmese Tributary and Trade Relations with China Between the Late Thirteenth and Eighteenth Centuries," 5.

67. Varthema explained, for example, that Pegu's exports of rubies to maritime merchants came from Upper Burma. Varthema's account of this can be found in Ludovico di Varthema, The Itinerary of Ludovico di Varthema of Bologna from 1502 to 1508, translated by John Winter Jones, (London: the Argonaut Press, 1928): 81.

[Traders] can go overland from Pegu and Siam to take the pepper and sandalwood to China--on the hinterland side of China--because the people of Pegu and Siam trade with Burma in lancharas and paraos up the rivers there are in the said kingdoms; and the merchants who go in this way...within a month...come back.<sup>68</sup>

Related to this trade was Chiengmai's role as a major supplier of musk to Pegu and Ayudhya, probably for maritime trade.<sup>69</sup> Ralph Fitch in the late sixteenth century, also described a trade relationship that linked Chinese merchants overland with Chiengmai. As Fitch explained:

Hither to Jamahey (Jangoma, that is, Chiengmai) come many Merchants out of China, and bring great store of Muske, Gold, Silver, and many other things of China worke.<sup>70</sup>

To some degree then, however uncertain the level of such trade, Chiengmai was coming into greater contact with a wider area of interior Southeast Asia and Southern China.

Domestic trade routes also helped the spread of religious beliefs tied closer to Southeast Asia. As I have suggested, Chiengmai's international links were not only with maritime Asia

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68. Tome Pires, The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires, (London: Hakluyt Society, 1944): I, 111.

69. Tome Pires, The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires, I, 111.

70. Ralph Fitch, "The Voyage of Master Ralph Fitch, Merchant of London," in Samuel Purchas (ed.), Hakluytus Posthumus, or Purchas his Pilgrimes, (Glasgow: Hakluyt Society, 1905): x, 195.

(as I will examine in the following section), but also overland to China and to other areas within Southeast Asia.<sup>71</sup> This is important, because two things also travelled along these routes in the late 14th and early fifteenth centuries: Buddhist monks and miniature replicas of the Mahabodhi temple. We have a lot of evidence of miniatures of the Mahabodhi Temple circulating throughout Asia.<sup>72</sup> There is also evidence of Chiengmai monks travelling to Pagan and of Mon monks travelling to Pagan as well. By the late fourteenth century, for example, monks were making pilgrimages from Chiengmai to Pagan, which were connected by a fourteenth century trade route,<sup>73</sup> where they probably saw the Mahabodhi replica at Pagan (Dhammacetti himself had studied at Pagan for five years).<sup>74</sup> Also it may be that Dhammacetti's accusation that monks were getting donations of grain and cotton and then selling them, may have something to do

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71. Chiengmai benefitted from trade with both the maritime ports of Ayudhya and Pegu and overland with China. Tome Pires says that Chiengmai supplied musk by both trade routes. Pires also mentions trade goods that come to both Burma and Chiengmai (volume I, pg. 111), but since he does not separate them into two categories, I am only able to say that by 1515, Chiengmai is really involved in international trade. Also, Tome Pires says much about Pegu's involvement in international trade. Tome Pires, The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires. I, 97-103.

72. John Guy, "The Mahabodhi Temple: Pilgrim Souvenirs of Buddhist India," The Burlington Magazine 133, no. 1059 (June, 1991): 356-367.

73. G. H. Luce and Ba Shin, "A Chieng Mai Mahathera Visits Pagan (1393 A.D.)," Artibus Asiae 24, no. 3 (1961): 330-332.

74. Nidana Ramadhipati-katha. 1.

with Mon monks travelling along trade routes through agricultural areas and market towns.<sup>75</sup>

Finally, E. W. Hutchinson has found a similarity between buildings at Chiengmai and Pagan associated with a Chiengmai monk who went to Pagan in the late fourteenth century and the Mahabodhi replicas at Pagan and Chiengmai. Hutchinson suggests that the plans and the inspiration for the Mahabodhi replica at Chiengmai may have been brought from Pagan by this monk. As Hutchinson explained:

The fact that these features are found in the three temples mentioned, --points to a common source of inspiration which, it is suggested, may have come from the memories and, possibly from the plans, which Sumana may have brought back with him from Pagan. The That-byin-nyo and the Mahabodhi temples at Pagan are particularly indicated.<sup>76</sup>

I will talk more about this later, but for now I just want to make the point that trade within interior Southeast Asia was probably increasing the spread of religious ideas as well.

## **B. Increasing Maritime Trade and Contacts**

Beyond growing interior trade and contacts, Chiengmai and Pegu, like Ayudhya, also had extra resources because of their

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75. Kalyani Inscription. 49.

76. E. w. Hutchinson, "The Seven Spires: A Sanctuary of the Sacred Fig Tree at Chiengmai," Journal of the Siam Society 39 (1951): 32.



links to maritime trade—Pegu controlled the ports where maritime traders came, and Chiengmai supplied many of the goods that were sold in these ports.<sup>77</sup> Due to the nature of available sources, however, the relative level of trade from one year to the next, or one generation to the next, is a difficult thing to gauge if not impossible. Inscriptions typically were made to record religious donations or royal acts rather than commercial transactions. Chronicles and *ayeidawhpon* (royal biographies) were concerned mainly with recording the accensions and deaths of kings, royal lineages, miraculous events, works of religious merit, and warfare, with very little attention paid to trade. Can we determine whether trade increased or not? And if we cannot, is there another approach that may be informative?

One way to approach the questions raised above is to divide the issue of increasing maritime trade and look at maritime trade generally throughout Southeast Asia and to examine maritime trade specifically involving Pegu and Chiengmai, my focus in this thesis. As for the first part of this division of maritime trade, Anthony Reid has made the case that the international trade of Southeast Asia really increased after 1400 due to a variety of

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77. Chiengmai benefitted from trade with both the maritime ports of Ayudhya and Pegu and overland with China. Tome Pires says that Chiengmai supplied musk by both trade routes. Pires also mentions trade goods that come to both Burma and Chiengmai (volume I, pg. 111), but since he does not separate them into two categories, I am only able to say that by 1515, Chiengmai is really involved in international trade. Also, Tome Pires says a lot about Pegu's involvement in international trade. Tome Pires, The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires, I, 97-103.

factors.<sup>78</sup> It is beyond the scope of this thesis to prove or disprove Reid's argument concerning the rise of maritime trade from the early fifteenth century but his suggestions are compelling and have found widespread support in the general literature. In terms of an increase in maritime trade connections specifically with Pegu and Chiengmai, however, a different approach must be followed given the paucity of commercial records for these areas in the fifteenth century, as I will now explain. Also, it should be pointed out that this discussion will chiefly be focussed on Pegu, and secondarily on Chiengmai. This is because many of the records of trade upon which we depend are accounts of European travellers, who rarely left the coasts. The only thing we can do because of this fact is to suggest, given Chiengmai's role as a traditional supplier of commodities to Ayudhya and Pegu in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries,<sup>79</sup> that Chiengmai's resources gained second-hand from maritime trade increased as maritime trade connections, trader communities, and commercial revenues grew in lower mainland ports of Burma and Ayudhya. Supplementary information comes from indigenous sources, such as the Kalyani

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78. Reid points to the increasing population and trade of Ming China, the opening of trade due to the Cheng Ho expedition, and the growing demand for spices in Europe. Anthony Reid, Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450-1680, II, 10-13.

79. Tome Pires describes Chiengmai's supply of musk to Pegu and Ayudhya in the 1510s in such a way as it seems that this trade was not sudden or periodic, but of longer duration and consistent. See Pires' account in Tome Pires, The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires, I, 111.

inscription, in which Chiengmai products clearly reached lower mainland ports such as Pegu, and formed substantial portions of gifts presented by lower mainland kings through their overseas embassies to places such as Sri Lanka.<sup>80</sup>

The approach that I will follow to suggest that there was an increase in maritime trade connections for Pegu and Chiengmai will be to examine a variety of different kinds of sources to find sometimes subtle indications of increasing trade and new commercial contacts, and extrapolate from these sources. First, we have records of a new trade connection between Pegu and the Mughal Empire, which took place early in Dhammacetti's reign, initiated by a Mughal trade mission to the Pegu court.<sup>81</sup> An early development, which indicates some sort of connection, trade or otherwise, with India, was the presence from the early fifteenth century of Indian mercenaries and firearms.<sup>82</sup> For the mid-fifteenth century we also have references to large numbers of resident

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80. See reference to over forty betel boxes made in Chiengmai that were sent to Sri Lanka by the king of Pegu in Kalyani Inscription, 41.

81. The Nidana Ramadhipati-katha refers to the arrival of representatives of the Mughal court as a 'trade mission' (13). The description of the communications between the leaders of the mission and Dhammacetti, seem to suggest that no direct trade connection had existed previously. See Nidana Ramadhipati-katha, 11-13.

82. Indian mercenaries, for example, armed with cannon and muskets (ကုလားဘုရင်ဂျီအမြောက်သေနတ်တပ်) were stationed to guard over the fortress at Bassein in the early fifteenth century. ဗညားဒလ, “ရာဇာဓိရာဇ် အရေးတော်ပုံ,” အရေးတော်ပုံ (၆) စောင်တွဲသို့, ဓမ္မတိမြန်မာမင်းများအရေးတော်ပုံ (ရန်ကုန်မြို့: ပန်းဆိုးတန်, n.d.): 328.

foreign traders in Chiengmai and Pegu.<sup>83</sup> Nikitin a Russian trader in the Indian Ocean in 1475, reported that "Pegu is...principally-inhabited by Indian dervishes...[t]he products derived from thence...are sold by the dervishes."<sup>84</sup>

The kings of Pegu and Chiengmai also began, from the mid-fifteenth century, to send numerous missions, trade and otherwise, overseas.<sup>85</sup> Also, monks from Chiengmai were travelling to Sri Lanka, not on royal boats, but on merchant ships,<sup>86</sup> which connected Chiengmai, through Ayudhya, to Sri Lanka.<sup>87</sup> Dhammacetti's mission to Sri Lanka was also sent on the ship of a merchant who was accompanied the monks.<sup>88</sup> indicating trade patterns that probably had been formed in earlier decades, Ludovico di Varthema, writing at the beginning of the sixteenth century, recorded maritime trade between Pegu and Pulicat, as if it was a traditional

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83. The Nidana Ramadhipati-katha mentions one Sri Lankan trader who was a long-term resident of Pegu in the mid-fifteenth century, and was selected by Dhammacetti to take his religious mission to Sri Lanka. See Nidana Ramadhipati-katha, 16, 17.

84. Athanasius Nikitin, "The Travels of Athanasius Nikitin of Twer," in R. H. Major (ed. & trans.), India in the Fifteenth Century Being a Collection of Narratives of Voyages to India, (London: Hakluyt Society, 1867): 20-1.

85. Dhammacetti, for example, sent one such mission to Sri Lanka, guided there by a Sri Lankan trader who was resident in Pegu. See Ramadhipatii Nidana-katha, 17.

86. Padaeng Chronicle, 111.

87. Padaeng Chronicle, 111.

88. Nidana Ramadhipati-katha, 117.

activity.<sup>89</sup>

An actual increase in trade is suggested by some of the above-mentioned points, but there is more support for this contention. This is involved in the nature of the European travel accounts from the fifteenth century and the early sixteenth century. An analysis of these accounts suggests that Pegu's reputation as a maritime trading port increased throughout the fifteenth century. Nicolö Conti, who described Burma around 1435 visited and described Mrauk-U in Arakan and Ava in Upper Burma, which he reached overland across the Arakan Yoma, rather than by the maritime route from Bassein upriver. Although he may have visited Pegu, it is unclear since the only possible reference is to a port called "Panconia." Furnivall suggests that he may be referring to either Martaban or Pegu,<sup>90</sup> but the main point that I can make here, is that Conti's account makes almost no reference to trade in this area. This does not mean that trade did not exist, but possibly that maritime trade was not as pronounced, or so distinguishing a feature of Pegu, for if it were, I think he would have mentioned it. Also, Conti makes no reference to foreign

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89. Varthema explains that Pulicat "is on of immense traffic in merchandise, and especially in jewels, for they come here from Zailon and from Pego." Ludovico di Varthema, The Itinerary of Ludovico di Varthema of Bologna from 1502 to 1508, 74.

90. J.S. Furnivall, "Europeans in Burma," Journal of the Burma Research Society 29, pt. 3 (1939): 238.

traders resident in Pegu, as we will find in later accounts.<sup>91</sup> As Harvey has also observed, Conti does not even refer to the ruby trade, which should have attracted a merchant's attraction right away, and thus suggests that the ruby trade which became so important to Pegu in the last half of the fifteenth century was not yet so important.<sup>92</sup>

A change seems to have occurred at some point, or gradually, during the four decades between Conti's account and the account of the Russian merchant Nikitin in 1475. Nikitin records that Pegu was a "not inconsiderable port," and explains that this port was populated mainly by foreigners (Indian dervishes) who sold the products to be had in Pegu.<sup>93</sup> An account of Pegu in 1494, by Hieronimo de Santo Stefano, also indicates that Pegu's role in maritime commerce was still growing. As Furnivall has observed, the route of travel followed by Santo Stefano went directly, via an Indian ship, from the Coromandel coast to Pegu and then to

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91. Poggio Bracciolini, "The Travels of Nicolö Conti, in the East, in the Early Part of the Fifteenth Century," in R. H. Major (ed. & trans.), India in the Fifteenth Century Being a Collection of Narratives of Voyages to India, (London: Hakluyt Society, 1867): 15.

92. See G. E. Harvey, History of Burma, 121; as Furnivall also explains, "Di Conti would certainly have mentioned rubies, if there had been a trade in rubies in Ava or Pegu." See Furnivall, "Europeans in Burma," 239. By contrast, Varthema at the beginning of the sixteenth century claims that in Pegu "[t]he sole merchandise of these people is jewels, that is, rubies." Ludovico di Varthema, The Itinerary of Ludovico di Varthema of Bologna from 1502 to 1508, 81.

93. Athanasius Nikitin, "The Travels of Athanasius Nikitin of Twer," 20-1.

Melaka, indicating that Pegu had become a key port on the maritime trade route from India to Southeast Asia.<sup>94</sup> This route was also followed by Varthema, who travelled with a group of Persian merchants to Pegu.<sup>95</sup> Further, the importance of trade goods to the king of Pegu was such that Santo Stefano's party was forced to sell their goods inside the city of Pegu and only the king was allowed to buy them.<sup>96</sup> The importance and extensiveness of trade goods for royal revenues was also indicated by the early sixteenth century account of Varthema, who explained:

[E]very year [the king of Pegu] has an income of about one million in gold. And this because in his country there is found much lacca, a good deal of sandal-wood, very much brazil-wood, cotton and silk in great quantities, and he gives all his income to his soldiers.<sup>97</sup>

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94. Furnivall explains: "He sailed direct from Coromandel to Pegu, and thence direct to Malacca, without calling in at any other port; this suggests not only that Pegu was the chief port along the coast of Lower Burma, but also that there was regular intercourse between south India, Pegu, and the Archipelago." See J. S. Furnivall, "Europeans in Burma," 240.

95. See Ludovico di Varthema, The Itinerary of Ludovico di Varthema of Bologna from 1502 to 1508, 80.

96. Hieronimo di Santo Stefano, "Account of the Journey of Hieronimo di Santo Stefano, a Genovese, addressed to Messer Giovan Jacobo Mainer," in R. H. Major (ed. & trans.), India in the Fifteenth Century Being a Collection of Narratives of Voyages to India, (London: Hakluyt Society, 1867): 6.

97. See Ludovico di Varthema, The Itinerary of Ludovico di Varthema of Bologna from 1502 to 1508, 83.

Finally, although it moves well-beyond the time-frame of this thesis, it should be mentioned that Pegu's role in maritime commerce became steadily more important by the time of, and after, the Portuguese conquest of Melaka in 1511. This is indicated by the account of Tome Pires in the 1510s, which suggests that Pegu was generally a maritime-trade-based kingdom.<sup>98</sup>

The Buddhist reform sects and the maritime trade connections that provided Dhammacetti and Tilokaraja with increasing wealth are probably related. As Lieberman has explained, reform-minded religious movements probably reached the coastal areas first and then moved inland along trade routes.<sup>99</sup> It is not clear what the background the monks who went to Sri Lanka from Chiengmai was, or whether or not increasing maritime trade connections inspired them to leave Southeast Asia and travel across the sea to Sri Lanka at the time that they did (in the first fourth of the fourteenth century, which, as I mentioned, is around the time that Anthony Reid said that international trade booms). But I cannot ignore the fact that the monks from Chiengmai, which was connected to the maritime trade, travelled first to the port of Ayudhya and went to Sri Lanka by a merchant vessel. I think that it may be possible that increasing international trade also brought new influences. Better evidence for this point is that all of the missions that led to the establishment of the great 'Orthodox' sects under

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98. See Tome Pires, The Suma Oriental of Tome Pires, I, 97-103.

99. Victor Lieberman, "Local Integration and Eurasian Analogies," 505-506.



Tilokaraja and Dhammacetti were preceded by the arrival in Chiengmai and Pegu of other groups of monks who had just come back from Sri Lanka.<sup>100</sup> It is probably from these monks that the monks from Chiengmai and Dhammacetti got their ideas of where to go for 'pure' ordination.

### Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have tried to make several points concerning the Mahabodhi replicas in fifteenth century Chiengmai and Pegu. I have tried to explain that by the second half of the fifteenth century, maritime and domestic trade which was helping central kings to increase the size and wealth of their kingdoms, and to strengthen their control a little more over their vassal rulers, also carried new ideas of Buddhist reform from overseas religious centers, like Sri Lanka and religious items, like miniature replicas of the Mahabodhi temple. I have also suggested that monks who probably followed regional trade routes (within Southeast Asia) contributed to a general belief in royal capitals of Southeast Asia of what 'pure' Buddhist orthodoxy was.

Finally, I have suggested that the new or revived views of Buddhist orthodoxy came at a time when sects of monks were looking for better ways to 'advertise' that they were more 'pure' than rival sects and kings had enough resources to support the growth

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100. The Jinakalamalipakaranam claims that there were Mon monks in Sri Lanka in 1424. Jinakalamalipakaranam, 130; The Padaeng Chronicle says that a Chiengmai monk returned from Sri Lanka in 1382. Padaeng Chronicle, 106.

of this and related sects. Thus, in the late fifteenth century Pegu and Chiengmai, central kings suddenly committed to Sri Lanka-based Buddhist orthodoxy. At the same time, increasing trade revenues probably allowed these kings to engage in widespread religious reform and increased religious patronage, and I think this is why Dhammacetti and Tilokaraja are remembered as the great patrons of Buddhism in their kingdoms.

### CHAPTER III

#### MAHABODHI REPLICAS

In this chapter, I will examine how the new resources that I discussed in the second chapter, such as trade and the spread of ideas, helped centralizing kings like Dhammacetti and Tilokaraja decide how they would 'solve' the world's chaos, a problem which I discussed in the first chapter. I will suggest that the kings of Chiengmai and Pegu came together with reform-minded sects of the *sangha* in order to reunify the world and preserve the *sasana*. Finally, I will argue that the way in which this process occurred and the nature of the trade contacts involved, helped make the building of Mahabodhi replicas a major part of the Dhammacetti and Tilokaraja's attempts to portray themselves as *dhammarajas* and *cakravartins* in order to gain religious legitimation for their rule.

#### A. The Pursuit of Theravada Buddhist Orthodoxy

The points that I have made in the last chapter may help to explain how mainland Southeast Asian kings who could gain commercial wealth from substantial maritime and domestic trade and rulers of kingdoms that were larger now than in the past century and a half had more resources to support a reformed or purified Buddhist sect and probably more influence throughout their kingdoms (administrative centralization, and political patronage of local rulers) than previously.<sup>101</sup> Also, to prove that they were

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101. I am trying to follow the chart in Victor Lieberman, "Local Integration and Eurasian Analogies," 519.

*dhammarajas*, the kings tried to purify and unify the religion in their kingdoms (bring order out of chaos) and 'advertised' the purity of their *sangha* with temple-building and inscriptions, such as the Kalyani Inscription.

Monks also played a role in this process. New sects of monks tried to convince everyone, including local rulers, that the established sects in the area were impure, probably in order to gain royal patronage for themselves.<sup>102</sup> Part of this effort was advertising to everyone that the new sect was really the purest sect. Thus, when late fifteenth century kings looked for a pure sect, they sometimes chose one that had already begun to spread throughout the region on its own.<sup>103</sup> Because central rulers were

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102. Padaeng Chronicle, for example, says that the New Sihala sect openly criticized the religious practices of the Old Sihala sect [that had gone from Sri Lanka, to Sukothai, and then on to Chiangmai and was then favored by the lord of Chiangmai], saying that they had added to their recitations "made-up words creating perversity not in accord with good grammar...and it would be immoral frivolity to the Sasana everywhere." Padaeng Chronicle, 110; Monks from Ayudhya also came to Chiangmai to challenge all of the sects there. Padaeng Chronicle, 105; Padaeng Chronicle also makes several references to monks 'begging' the local ruler to give them paddy fields and servants to support them. Padaeng Chronicle. 118 [paragraph, 83].

103. Padaeng Chronicle and Jinakalamalipakaranam say that the New sihala sect was established in the 1420s by a group of monks who went to Sri Lanka for reordination on their own. They did not receive royal patronage until Tilokaraja became king of Chiangmai in 1441. Padaeng Chronicle 107-112; Jinakalamalipakaranam 126-138. So in this case, one of the two case studies of this paper, the king selected as a pure sect, one that had already been established in his realm. According to the Kalyani Inscription, Dhammacetti sent his own mission of monks to be reordained, but from other sources we

wealthier and stronger, they probably had more influence throughout their kingdoms than they did decades before. Now, when these rulers purified a sect, this purification probably had a kingdom-wide (or even region-wide) rather than a local effect. When neighboring rulers (or vassals?) heard about the Chiangmai king's patronage of the New Sihala sect, for example, they wanted it too. Thus one of them, Suvannanidhi, ruler of Jengsaen, "Entertaining the desire to bring (the *sasana*) to support (and) sustain his own country, the [lord] dispatched one courtier...with presents to the court of...[Tilokaraja] asking permission to invite Lord Maha Nanagambhira...They arrived...The [lord] had people construct Vat Padaeng as the foremost (monastery) and Vat Comgatti and Daiya Aram, one after another, totalling fifty...Outside the city there were also a great many. The braya, heading ministers and courtiers and the people of that country, was exceedingly happy and greatly praised the merits and virtues of Lord Maha Nanagambhira."<sup>104</sup> since, as in this case, local rulers emulated the central king and patronized the centrally-recognized sect, it no longer made much sense for rival sects to leave and go to a smaller vassal city and they probably had no choice but to

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sent his own mission of monks to be reordained, but from other sources we have information that six Mon monks were reordained along with the Chiangmai monks in Sri Lanka in 1424 and we do not know the relationship between these monks and the monks sent by Dhammacetti several decades later. Jinakalamalipakaranam. 130.

104. Padaeng Chronicle. 112-113.

join the royally-recognized sect.

### **(1) Chiengmai**

In 1441, Tilokaraja deposed his father Sam Fhan Ken and then took the throne of Chiengmai for himself. But it was not until five months later that monks of the New Sihala sect, which had been driven out of Chiengmai by Tilokaraja's father (who was a patron of the Old Sihala sect) years before, returned to Chiengmai. It was only after the New Sihala monks had returned that Tilokaraja began to focus his patronage on this sect.<sup>105</sup> This may indicate how the new king, who had just usurped power from his father who was a patron of the Old Sihala sect, needed Buddhist legitimization from a different sect, one that he could claim was more 'pure' than the sect of his father. The chronicles provide one reason why Tilokaraja was able to justify and advertise the purity of the New Sihala sect. When the formerly exiled New Sihala sect reached Chiengmai and Tilokaraja, "learned that Lord Maha Nanagambhira had brought the Sasana, the Mahabodhi tree, an image of the Lord, and the Three Pitaka to repose in the city, the [king] was exceedingly delighted and made people dismantle an old royal pavilion and re-erect it as a monastery for him to live in."<sup>106</sup> This meant that the new sect had physical 'advertisements'

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105. Alexander B. Griswold's letter to Sao Saimong Mangrai in the introduction to Padaeng Chronicle. 41.

106. Padaeng Chronicle. 111-112.

of their purity that were also useful for the king.

Kings had favored one sect over another before, and the unfavored sects usually left, were kicked out of the capital, or remained and competed with the new sect. In the present case, however, something different happened. According to the chronicles, the head of the Old Sihala sect stepped down and let the head of the New Sihala sect, Nanagambhira, take his place. The old head of the *sangha* also told all the members of his sect that they had previously followed the wrong ordination—they would have to leave the order and be reordained according to the new teachings.<sup>107</sup> What may have happened was that kings such as those of Chiangmai began to have the resources to support increasing numbers of monks, and monks probably began to realize that they were better off being reordained and keeping a king's patronage, than by moving on and trying to find a new patron elsewhere. As a result:

[beginning with the year 1452,] right down to the present day, all the Sihala monks belonging to the realm of the monarch of [Chiangmai] come to the city of [Chiangmai] bringing with them aspirants to the higher ordination from all the townships, and every year confer the higher ordination upon them at the Sima set up by Tilaka.<sup>108</sup>

Since the central ruler's recognition of the sect as the pure

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107. Padaeng Chronicle. 112

108. Jinakalamalipakaranam. 138.

sect meant more throughout the kingdom, instead of just the local area, the various sects in the kingdom had no choice but to be reordained. We do not have statistics for monks, but there are accounts which indicate that the new sect patronized in Chiengmai (and in Pegu too, as I will explain below) began to gain so many followers that they reached the limit of their ability to house and feed them,<sup>109</sup> which was probably what happened over and over again in the fourteenth and early fifteenth century. Now, however, the king of Chiengmai was able to go beyond this and continue to build monasteries and donate lands and people to meet the needs of the growing purified sect, which indicated the growing wealth of the central ruler. Thus, the head of the New Sihala sect, Nanagambhira [the head of this sect] asked Tilokaraja to construct a new monastery. After this, this king "built each year ten monasteries, twenty monasteries, thirty, forty, fifty monasteries throughout all Nabbapuri [Chiengmai] totaling five hundred, all exceedingly prosperous."<sup>110</sup> This massive temple and monastery-building program probably reflects the increasing wealth of Chiengmai at this time.

The king of Chiengmai did not stop here and neither did the monks. The king reinforced the view that he was a great *dharmmaraja* by advertising the purity of his *sangha* and his reunification of the *sangha* by making an unprecedented effort, since the fall of

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109. Padaeng Chronicle. 112

110. Padaeng Chronicle. 112.



Pagan, to make Chiangmai the center of the Buddhist world by building a replica of the Mahabodhi temple of Bodhgaya, India. The Jinakalamalipakaranam describes the construction of the Wat Cet Yot [the Mahabodhi replica] in detail:

The Sovereign Lord Tilaka [Tilokaraja] built, during the year of the Boar, the year 817 [1455] of the Royal Saka Era at an elevated and delightful spot on the banks of the river Rohini in a direction north-west of the capital city of Nabbisi [Chiangmai], a monastery for the residence of the great Elder named Uttamapanna. In the selfsame year, he planted a Bodhi tree there. Even before that, did the monks go to the Island of the Sihalas and bring from there a seed from the southern branch and propagate it at the monastery situated at the foot of the Devapabbata. On this occasion, the King had it brought from there and planted it here. As the Great Bodhi was planted there, the place became known as the Monastery of the Great Bodhi. And when he had planted it he caused the construction of a scaffolding resembling that around the Great Bodhi under which Mara was conquered, (and made a representation of] the seven hallowed spots and all other details.<sup>111</sup>

Tilokaraja went beyond this and tried to establish Chiangmai as the world center of Buddhism by also calling a 'world conference' on Buddhism, the "Eighth Council of Revision," held at the Mahabodhi replica (Wat Cet Yot) in Chiangmai in 1477.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>111</sup>. Jinakalamalipakaranam. 139-140.

<sup>112</sup>. Alexander Griswold, "The Holy Land Transported," 182.

Tilokaraja's reputation as a *cakravartin* was also secured in the chronicles. He is known in the various chronicles, for example, as 'universal monarch,'<sup>113</sup> 'lord of the world,'<sup>114</sup> and as 'wheel-turning monarch,'<sup>115</sup> all representative of a *cakravartin*.

The New Sihala monks, now established in Chiangmai as the royally-supported sect and portrayed as the purest of sects, also tried to maintain their establishment in Chiangmai and throughout the kingdom with propaganda and advertising also. Two groups, an unhappy monk who went to Sri Lanka and came back and disavowed the old sect, and the remaining members of the old sect who returned to the area after being far away in foreign lands, for example, are portrayed in the chronicles of the New Sihala sect as bad. The dissident monk, who may have been attempting the same thing that Maha Nanagambhira did (by breaking with the old sect and going to Sri Lanka for new ordination), is portrayed as completely evil: he "caused the Sasana to disintegrate and made people burn and bury the images of the Lord (or) cast (them) into the river."<sup>116</sup> This portrayal, however, makes much more sense when we remember that the followers of the new sect wrote the Padaeng Chronicle from which I got this information, and these followers had a reason to

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113. Jinakalamalipakaranam, 134, 136, 137.

114. Sasanavamsa. 56.

115. Sasanavamsa, 56.

116. Padaeng Chronicle. 112.

portray the leader of a rival sect that had come close to achieving the same thing. For whatever reason, the New Sihala sect was able to get the attention of the new king. Also, it says in the New Sihala sect's Padaeng Chronicle that when a demon was said to be terrorizing Kengtung, the ruler supposedly called monks from Jenglae and they failed to put an end to the demon, then the ruler of Kengtung asked monks from Sondok Jenglom, but they failed as well. It was only after the New Sihala sect voluntarily sent their own monks, that the demon was ended.<sup>117</sup> This seems to be part of the propaganda package of the sect to attract support for itself away from other sects. I think that these stories were probably spread during Tilokaraja's reign and only later were put into the chronicle which was written in 1512.

## **(2) Pegu**

In Pegu, King Dhammacetti, like king Tilokaraja of Chieng Mai, portrayed himself as a great Buddhist ruler.<sup>118</sup> Dhammacetti, however, took a more direct approach than Tilokaraja did, by sending a royally-sponsored mission from Pegu to Sri Lanka. The Kalyanai Inscription which records this mission, includes too many details to relate all of them here. But the effect was the same. As I mentioned before, Dhammacetti was concerned with the

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117. Padaeng Chronicle. 113-114.

118. He was Lord of the White Elephant...was versed in the Tripitaka and the sciences of takka...had exceedingly deep faith in the Religion of the Teacher." Kalyani Inscription, 34.

divisions in the *sangha* and the various sects, and he also wanted to show the world that as a *dharmaraja* he was bringing order out of chaos. Like the New Sihala monks of Chiangmai in 1424, Dhammacetti basically claimed that the previous ordination was wrong. More important, Dhammacetti explained that "[i]t was owing to the division of the priests of Ramannadesa into different sects in former times, that...impurity, heresy, and corruption arose in the Religion."<sup>119</sup> In the letter that Dhammacetti sent to the monks of Sri Lanka, he said that the monks that he sent to Sri Lanka:

...will proceed to elect from among the fraternity, who are the spiritual successors of the residents of the Mahavihara monastery, a Chapter of priests, who are free from censure and reproach, and will receive at their hands the upasampada ordination in the udakukkhepasima consecrated on the Kalyani River, where the Blessed One had enjoyed a bath.<sup>120</sup>

The monks of Dhammacetti's mission were also reordained by the Mahavihara sect in exactly the same way as the monks from Chiangmai.<sup>121</sup>

The Kalyani Inscription explains that after purifying the *sangha*, the *sangha* from all over the kingdom of the land of Rammanya (Rammahhadesa), including the forests, came to Pegu to be

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119. Kalyani Inscription, 38.

120. Kalyani Inscription, 41.

121. Kalyani Inscription, 43.

reordained and unified:

[Dhammacetti] purged the Religion of its impurities throughout the whole of Ramannadesa, and created a single sect of the whole body of the Priesthood. From the year [1476] to the year [1479]...the priests throughout Ramannamandala, who resided in towns and villages, as well as those who lived in the forest, continuously received the extremely pure form of the Sihala upasampada ordination, that had been handed down by the spiritual successors of the Mahavihara sect. The leading priests were 800 in number; and the young priests numbered 14, 265; and the total of the numbers of both classes of priests was 15, 065..."

It also appears that Dhammacetti was able to increase donations to the *sangha* to be able to support large numbers of new monks. The chronicles, the Kalyani Inscription, and temple remains all indicate a large-scale temple-building program and other donations to support the *sangha*. The Nidana Ramadhipati-katha states:

He built monasteries without number, such as the Mahajayarama Cave-temple group, with 4(0?) land (?) and 10,000 slaves; the Nandarama, with 40 constituent monasteries, to which 50 slaves and 500 measures of land were dedicated; the Vijjarama, the Asokarama, and the Pabbarama, all with 40 constituent monasteries, to which he made similar allocations; the Veluvana, with 100 monasteries, to which 300 slaves and 500 measures of land were dedicated; and the Mat, with 100 monasteries also, to which he dedicated 500 slaves and 1,000 measures of land.

Dhammacetti also provided for the physical needs of the monks beyond slaves, land, and buildings:

All these [monasteries mentioned above] he furnished with necessities, down to the very food, dogs, and cats, and boys to rub oil of tumeric on the monks when they bathed; down to the floorcloths and dusters and oilrags for the libraries and toothsticks. All medicinal herbs and essences he provided. Whatever monks came from elsewhere to study in Hamssavati he provided with accomodation, with servants...122

However, Dhammacetti actually reduced the amount of land assigned to the Shwedagon.<sup>123</sup> But it is also true that Dhammacetti's wealth also came from maritime commerce. While Dhammacetti was preserving, then, agricultural land (but he still donated a lot of it to monasteries), he replaced the declining land donations to the *sangha* with donations of temple-building, gold, and bells,<sup>124</sup> probably because his wealth from maritime commerce made him able to donate these things.

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122. Nidana Ramadhipati-Katha. 25-26.

123. E. Harvey, History of Burma, 119.

124. Monk of Athwa, Slapat Raiawan Datow Smin Ron, translated by R. Halliday in R. Halliday (ed. & trans.), "Slapat Rajawan Datow Smin Ron—A History of Kings," Journal of the Burma Research Society 13, pt. 1 (1923): 56.

**B. Why the Mahabodhi?**

There is still an important question. Why the Mahabodhi replicas? Asked another way, what is the connection between the Mahabodhi replicas of the late fifteenth century at Chiangmai and Pegu and the Mahabodhi replica at Pagan?

The seven stations symbolism and the Mahabodhi replicas is associated in some way with the New Sihala sect. But we do not know why the New Sihala sect was associated with the seven stations Symbolism 125 and the Mahabodhi replicas more than any other sect which had gone to Sri Lanka before or after them. We do know how the seven stations and the Mahabodhi replicas, as I have mentioned above, could be used to display true orthodoxy and purity of a sect, but why the other sects failed to adopt this is unclear. Thus, this difference remains an important question, that requires further research. The answers, however, may be more obvious than they seem. Previous research on the Mahabodhi replicas, however, has failed to find what should have been a clear answer since they lacked a key piece of information which only became available this year, 1996, and which I will describe below.

E. W. Hutchinson first asked the question of where the Wat Cet Yot (but not the Shwegugyi) model came from, and suggested that it probably came from plans of the Pagan Mahabodhi replica brought

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125. See Appendix VI for the seven stations at Shwegugyi; Appendix VII for the seven stations at Wat Cet Yot, and Appendix VIII for the seven stations at Mahabodhi temple in Bodhgaya. Unfortunately, I do not yet have a plan of the seven stations in the Mahabodhi temple at Pagan.

by a monk to Chiengmai from Pagan.<sup>126</sup> Alexander B. Griswold, however, as well as others criticized Hutchinson's view that the Wat Cet Yot was based on the Mahabodhi replica at Pagan. First, they believed that the idea could not come from Pagan or from a model based on the Pagan Mahabodhi temple, because the Mahabodhi temple at Pagan did not have the seven stations, a key part of the Mahabodhi temple at Bodhgaya and the Mahabodhi replicas at Chiengmai and Pegu, since the locations of the seven stations in Bodhgaya, Pegu, and Chiengmai of Mahabodhi temple are quite similar. Thus, he suggested that the model of the Mahabodhi temple at Pegu and Chiengmai came directly from Bodhgaya.<sup>127</sup> Second, although Pagan, Chiengmai, and Pegu all had their monks purified according to the Mahavihara's ordination, and sent missions to Sri Lanka to get it, Sri Lanka has no temple-replicas of the Mahabodhi temple. However, there is no reliable record that Dhammacetti or Tilokaraja sent a mission directly to the Mahabodhi temple in Bodhgaya, India, although Pagan sent missions to repair that temple.

How can we explain the missions to Sri Lanka in the fifteenth century and the building of the Mahabodhi replicas in the same century? This is the point at which I can mention the new piece of information. Only this year, 1996, did the Archaeological Survey of

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126. E. W. Hutchinson, "The Seven Spires: A Sanctuary of the Sacred Fig Tree at Chiengmai," 32.

127. Alexander Griswold, "The Holy Land Transported," 218.



Burma find the remains of the seven stations at the Mahabodhi replica at Pagan.<sup>128</sup> This discovery confirms a claim in the Burmese sources, such as the Pagan Thudethana Lanhniun, that the Pagan Mahabodhi replica had the seven stations, although this chronice-source was not known to Hutchinson, Griswold, or apparently almost anyone else examining the Mahabodhi temples.<sup>129</sup>

How were they connected? More research needs to be made concerning this recent discovery before we can say for certain what the connection is. However, I have a likely scenario of how they are connected, using the argument that I have followed in this paper. I have argued that many mainland Southeast Asian rulers in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries were too weak and too superficially Buddhist to really control the *sangha* everywhere in their kingdoms, and as a consequence political fragmentation was combined with religious fragmentation. By the late fifteenth century, however, central kings at Chiengmai and Pegu had more power over their vassals and more wealth to increase patronage for their kingdom's *sangha*. As *dharmarajas* who were now able to purify and unify the *sangha* in a real way, and as *cakravartins* whose

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128. This information has not yet been published. It was provided by Dr. Richard Cooler of Northern Illinois University, who is in communication with the Burmese restoration project at Pagan.

i29. Thပုဂံသုတေသနလမ်းညွှန် tells that there is an ancient building north of the temple as well as other pagodas. And some say that there were originally structures of the seven stations at the site. ဦးမိုးကော, ပုဂံသုတေသနလမ်းညွှန်, (ပုဂံစာပေမိမိအုတ်ပြည်သူ့လက်စွဲစာစဉ်, n.d.): 293.

resources allowed them to increase their territories and the numbers of their vassals, Dhammacetti and Tilokaraja may have believed that they were bringing order out of the chaos of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>130</sup>

The building of a Mahabodhi replica by a mainland Southeast Asian king in association with a reordination of the *sangha* was not unprecedented—it happened before, in 1215, in Pagan. The great religious transformation of the late twelfth century and early thirteenth century in Pagan was when the Mahavihara sect of Buddhist monks were introduced to Pagan in 1192, by monks who had gone to Sri Lanka for reordination and came back, challenging the established Maramma sect. From this time on, Pagan was closely tied to Sri Lanka in its purification of the *sangha*. The Mahavihara sect, although no Mahabodhi replica was built in its homeland of Sri Lanka, focussed its attention on the seven weeks after the Buddha's enlightenment, and on the Bodhi tree at Bodhgaya.<sup>131</sup> It seems probable that the new attention to the importance of this event and the importance of the Bodhi tree led Burmese kings to emphasize the renewed purity of their religion by building a replica of the Mahabodhi temple in their capital, along with the seven stations. The Pagan kings also sent missions directly to

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130. For Dhammacetti, see Kalyani Inscription, 38.

131. Vidya Dehejia, "Bodhgaya and Sri Lanka," in Bodhgaya, the Site of Enlightenment, Janice Leoshko (ed.), (Bombay, India: Marg Publications, 1988): 100.

Bodhgaya to restore the Mahabodhi temple which was in a dilapidating condition.<sup>132</sup>

As I have suggested previously, increasing trade, not only at sea, but also overland inside of Southeast Asia also may have increased the circulation of religious stories, ideas, and religious items among the major Southeast Asian trade centers (which were often also the capitals of kingdoms). Chiengmai had trade links with Pagan and Buddhist monks from Chiengmai were going to Pagan from the late fourteenth century.<sup>133</sup> Dhammacetti, who was a monk earlier in his life, not only spent five years studying Buddhism in Pagan, but he also mentioned the return of the Sri Lankan-trained Buddhist monks in 1192 to Pagan in his Kalyani Inscription.<sup>134</sup> Also, during the growth of international trade from 1400 on, Buddhist pilgrims to India and elsewhere began spreading miniature models of the Mahabodhi Temple at Bodhgaya throughout Asia.<sup>135</sup> I am suggesting that growing international trade and the exchange of religious ideas along the trade routes, was creating a common expectation in trade cities (many of which were central

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132. Robert L. Brown, "Bodhgaya and South-East Asia," in Bodhgaya, the Site of Enlightenment. Janice Leoshko (ed.), 106-107.

133. G. H. Luce & Ba Shin, "A Chieng Mai Mahathera visits Pagan (1393 A.D.)," 330-332.

134. Kalyani Inscription. 30.

135. John Guy, "The Mahabodhi Temples: Pilgrim Souvenirs of Buddhist India," 356-367.

capitals) of what Buddhist 'orthodoxy' was. The closer links that Chiangmai (through monks and trade) and Pegu (through Dhammacetti and probably trade) had with Pagan probably meant that the spread of Mahabodhi models was associated with the spread of the stories of the religious reform at Pagan after 1192 and its link with the great Mahabodhi replica at Pagan.

Dhammacetti and Tilokaraja may have also built Mahabodhi replicas because it had been done in Pagan to show that their kingdoms were the equals or greater than what Pagan had been. Just these two kings display of religion, I think that to advertise their restoration of political order by making their capitals the new religious and political center of 'Jambudipa' would probably be important. The most well-known example of the previous world order they were restoring was Pagan. Just like the ruler of Pagan in 1215, Dhammacetti and Tilokaraja tied themselves to the newest purified Buddhist sect, reordained by the Mahavihara sect, and then purified and unified the *sanghas* of their realms. This religious 'rebirth' was also accompanied by the planting of seedlings from the original Bodhi tree and by the royal construction of a replica of the Mahabodhi temple and the seven stations. By doing this, Dhammacetti and Tilokaraja each seem to have been emphasizing that they had ended political and religious chaos and that their kingdom had replaced Pagan as the religious center and political pivot of the restored universal order.

**Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, I have examined how trade and the spread of ideas helped Dhammacetti and Tilokaraja decide how they would 'solve' the world's chaos. These two kings came together with reform-minded sects of the *sangha* in order to reunify the world and preserve the *sasana*. I have also argued that the way in which this process occurred and the nature of the trade contacts involved, helped make the their construction of Mahabodhi temple replicas an important part of the Dhammacetti's and Tilokaraja's attempts to portray themselves as *dhammarajas* and *cakravartins*.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE SEVEN STATIONS

In the previous chapters, I have attempted to explain how and why Mahabodhi replicas spread throughout Southeast Asia at this time, especially in the fifteenth century. In this chapter, I will examine how the Mahabodhi replicas built at Pagan, Pegu, and Chiangmai made the seven stations an essential part of the temple arrangement, and thus indicates a special relationship between the Mahabodhi replicas within this area of mainland Southeast Asia.

I will suggest that while growing international trade helped to spread ideas of orthodox Buddhism and its relation to the legitimation of kingship, growing domestic trade and other contacts within this area of mainland Southeast Asia probably spread a more specific theme of Theravada Buddhism focussed more directly on the importance of the seven stations' symbolism. This has become especially evident, since, although the construction of Mahabodhi replicas in mainland Southeast Asia does not seem to have carried into the sixteenth century, the symbolism of the seven stations used in conjunction with the bodhi tree and royal efforts to prove *cakkravartin*-status, at first tied to the Mahabodhi replicas, was adopted by Bayinnaung, the Burmese *cakkravartin par excellence* (he was entitled *Jamneh Duih Cah* or "Victor of the Ten Directions"),<sup>136</sup> in the construction of his

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136. The ten directions were "the four cardinal directions, the four intermediate points, and the spheres above and below the plane of earth." See Victor B. Lieberman, Burmese Administrative Cycles: Anarchy and Conquest, c. 1580-1760, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984): 31, 31n.

great temples, such as the Maha-chedi in the late sixteenth century in Pegu.<sup>137</sup>

### **A. Structure of the temples**

First, I will look at the structure of the temples at Pegu and Chiangmai. Unfortunately, concerning the Shwegugyi temple at Pegu (Appendix I), I could only obtain a rough plan. Therefore, I will depend on the Griswold's description of Shwegugyi temple:

The massive podium, built on a foundation of laterite, is pierced with vaulted tunnels, which are now blocked with debris, is largely still in place, but all the stucco is gone, and it is impossible to discern what the surface treatment was. The westward extension of the podium is much decayed. So are the five obelisks, the upper portions of which are missing altogether; their canopies, if they ever had them, have disappeared. Of

137. In the construction of Bayinnaung's great temple, the Mahachedi at Pegu in 1559, for example, there is no evidence to suggest that this temple was a Mahabodhi replica. However, there is clear textual evidence that the symbolism of the seven stations, used in conjunction with the emplacement of a bodhi tree at the temple, was an important part of the symbolism of this royal temple. As the Nidana Ramadhipati-katha describes the construction of this temple: "[f]or enshrining itself they fashioned a Bodhi tree with roots of silver and trunk of coral, and trees the colour of sansoy to stand at the four quarters. The leaves blended harmoniously with the coral hue of their stalks and the ruby of their tips. This tree they set up and placed a jewelled throne to the east of it, and on it an image of the Buddha in gold. The Seven Stations too they fashioned, and pictures of the Bodhisatta descending from heaven to be conceived and born for the last time, and of Him practising asceticism." See Nidana Ramadhipati-katha. 99.

the central obelisk, perhaps no more than a third of the original height remains, and the truncated ruin is now crowned by a small modern stupa. The two small obelisks at the east have openings, which perhaps gave access to dog's-leg stairways that have now vanished. As the pit of for the bodhi tree has disappeared, there is no means of knowing whether it was at the end of the terrace or on the western extension...At the center of the north and south faces, there are steep massive flights of stone steps leading from ground level straight up the sides of the podium to the terrace. At the four corners there are diagonal buttresses.<sup>138</sup>

The structure of the Wat Cet Yot was built of laterite, with a facing of brick and stucco. It has a group of five obelisks and is crowned with two small stupas on the eastern extension. Also, the massive platform, in which there is no *cella* inside, and the vaulted corridor runs through the eastern extension into the platform and stops at the stairway, which gives access to the upper terrace (the sanctum is above). At the western extension with the vaulted interiors (there is a pair of buttresses, interpreted as a vaulted shrine), there is a square pit for the bodhi tree and a shrine for an 'outer vajrasana.' There are also sculptures of the devatas on the walls of the platform. The total length from east to west of the whole monument of 64.33 m. is more

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138. A. B. Griswold, The Holy Land Transported, Parnavitana Felicitation Volume, 208-209.



than four times that of its width, which never exceeds 15 m.<sup>139</sup> The structure of Wat Cet Yot is much smaller than the Mahabodhi temple at Bodhgaya. As Griswold explains, the obelisks at Bodhgaya and Pagan are three to four times higher than that at Chiangmai and the area it covers at Bodhgaya is sixteen times larger than that of Chiangmai.<sup>140</sup>

### **B. What are the seven stations?**

The seven stations are the historical sites that commemorate the activities of the Buddha in the seven weeks after his enlightenment under the great bodhi tree at Bodhgaya. During the first week, which is commemorated by the first station, Bodhipallank ('A seat of Wisdom'), the Buddha was still seated at the foot of the bodhi tree and enjoyed the bliss of the emancipation for seven days: "...the Blessed One sat motionless for seven days, realizing the bliss of Nirvana."<sup>141</sup> During the second week, "the master having thus by this miracle dispelled the deva's

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139. E.W. Hutchinson, "The Seven Spires," Journal of the Siam Society, 39 (1951):9

140. A. B. Griswold, The Holy Land Transported, Parnavitana Felicitation Volume, 205

141. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, Buddhist Birth Stories, Nidana Katha, (London, 1925): 200

doubts, stood a little to the north-east of the seat,<sup>142</sup> and the Buddha stood and contemplated under the tree without blinking for seven days. This site became known as the 'steadfast gaze' and is called 'Animisa.' In the third week, the Buddha created the walkway between the seat and the 'steadfast gaze' spot and walked this way back and forth without touching the earth, dispelling the doubts of the devatas. This site is called the 'jeweled walkway.' In the fourth week, the Buddha went to the treasure house that the devas created to the north-west of the bodhi tree, and he meditated there, thinking out the Abhidhamma Pitaka. This site is called 'Ratnaqhara.' In the fifth week, the Buddha went to the Ajapala tree site (Shepherd's Nigrodhatree) and the daughters of Mara came, but failed to distract the Buddha.<sup>143</sup> This site is called 'Ajapalanigrodha.' In the sixth week, the Buddha went to the Mucalinda tree and the nagaraja, Mucalinda, protected the Buddha with seven folds of his hood from a rain storm; this site being called 'Mucalinda.'<sup>144</sup> In the seventh week, the Buddha sat down beneath the Rajayatana tree and enjoyed the bliss of deliverance.<sup>145</sup> At the end of the seventh week, two merchants came and donated food to the Buddha and the Buddha presented them with

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142. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, Buddhist Birth Stories, Nidana Katha, 200.

143. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, Buddhist Birth Stories. Nidana Katha. 201.

144. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, Buddhist Birth Stories. Nidana Katha. 204.

145. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, Buddhist Birth Stories, Nidana Katha, 204.

his hair. This site is called 'Rajayanatana.' The seven stations commemorate all of the above-mentioned activities of the Buddha.

The earlier Buddhist texts, such as Vinaya Texts, only discuss the first four weeks and later texts begin to mention the last three weeks, making the total seven weeks.<sup>146</sup> Although these later texts, such as Nidana Katha, discuss the seven stations, they only mention the directions of the first four stations, and it was not until much later, in eighteenth century biographies such as Tathagata-Oudana, that the layout of the seven stations, including directions and distances, are mentioned.

### C. Layout of the Seven Stations

There are two ways to trace the layout of the seven stations. One approach is to trace the layout from the actual archaeological survey, and the other approach is to do so from textual descriptions. I will first look at the layout from the archaeological survey and, subsequently from constructions of the layout based on textual information.

#### (1.) Shwegugyi

Concerning the seven stations at Pegu, Griswold, who cites the Archaeological Survey of Burma in 1913-1914, claims that traces of the seven stations exist at the temple site, overgrown by vegetation except for the jeweled walkway. The directions and the

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146. Donald M. Stadner, "A Fifteenth-Century Royal Monument in Burma and the Seven Stations in Buddhist Art," The Art Bulletin (March, 1991): 41.

distances of the seven stations are as follows:

1. first week: Bodhipallanka... it is at the center, outer vajrasana

2. second week: Animisa... it is at 40 m. northeast of the bodhi tree.

3. third week: Cankama, 'the Buddha's walkway'... it is rebuilt presently at 15 m. northeast of the bodhi tree.

4. fourth week: Ratnaghara... it is at 50 m. northwest (of the tree)

5. fifth week: Ajapala tree site... it is at 200 m. east (of the tree)

6. sixth week: Mucalinda lake... southeast (of the tree)

7. seventh week: Rajayatana... 50 m. south (of the tree) 147

Today, however, the surviving structures only include the central temple, which is the shrine that was dedicated to the Ajapala tree and the Mucalinda lake.

## **(2.) Wat Cet Yot**

Concerning the seven stations at Wat Cet Yot in Chiangmai, five stations have remained and two others such as the 'Jeweled

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147. A. B. Griswold, The Holy Land Transported, Parnavitana Felicitation Volume, 215-217.

Walkway' (Cankama) and the 'House of the Gems' (Ratnaghara) have disappeared. Concerning the 'Jewelled Walkway,' Hutchinson explains that the "bricks and masonry [are] piled to the top of the north wall near the center where it is said that some monks' cells once existed: it is considered by some that in early days [it was a] traditional "Jewelled-cloister."<sup>148</sup> The locations of the seven stations also seem to be consistent at both sites, which suggests that the planning of the seven stations had been standardized by the end of the fifteenth century. According to Hutchinson, in the south wall and outside the wall, at a short distance from the opening, is a small circular tower in ruins near the supposed traditional site of the Mimosop tree-the traditional *Rajayatana* tree. He further explains that the Amimisa cedi is on the north side, just outside the enclosure wall.<sup>149</sup> The directions and the distances of the seven stations are as follows:

1. first week: Bodhipallanka...it is at the outer vajrasana.
2. second week: Animisa...40 m. northeast [of the tree].
3. third week: Cankama [the Jeweled Walkway]...it was probably located at north and now it has disappeared.
4. fourth week: Ratnaghara [the House of the Gems]...it

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148. E. W. Hutchinson, "The Seven Spires," 10.

149. E. W. Hutchinson, "The Seven Spires," 9-10.

has disappeared. However, the Chronicle of the Seven Spires mentions it to be northwest.

5. fifth week: the Ajapala tree site...100 m. east [of the tree].

6. sixth week: Mucalinda lake...southeast of the lake, the center of the lake is 150 m. southeast.

7. seventh week: Rajayatana...50 m. south [of the tree].

### (3.) Bodhgaya

According to the ground plan of which was reconstructed in the 1880s by Cunningham, the layout of the seven stations at Bodhgaya (Appendix VIII) is as follows:

1. first week: Bodhipallanka... it is at the center, outer vajrasana.

2. second week: Animisa...40 m. northeast [of the tree].

3. third week: Cankama, 'the Buddha's walkway'...15 m. northeast.

4. fourth week: Ratnaghara...50 m. northwest.

5. fifth week: Ajapala tree site...60 m. east ?

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150. A. B. Griswold, The Holy land Transported, Parनाविताना Felicitation Volume, 214-217.

6. sixth week: Mucalinda lake... southeast?

7. seventh week: Rajayatana... 50 m. south? 151

#### **D. The layout of the seven stations from the texts:**

The Nidana Katha mentions the layout of the first four stations as follows: during the second week, "the master having thus by this miracle dispelled the deva's doubts, stood a little to the north-east of the seat,"<sup>152</sup> and the Buddha stood and contemplated under the tree without blinking for seven days. In the third week, the Buddha created the walkway between the seat and the steadfast gaze spot and walked back and forth without touching the earth, dispelling the doubts of the devatas. In the fourth week, the Buddha went to the treasure house that the devas built to the north-west of the bodhi tree, and meditated there, considering the Abhidhamma Pitaka and the entire Patthana.<sup>153</sup> Thus, the layout from the text is as follows:

1st...outer vajrasana...center.

2nd...the steadfast gazing...NE.

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151.A. Cunningham, Mahabodhi or the Great Buddhist Temple under the Bodhi Tree at Buddha-gaya, (London, 1892): plan.

152. C.A. F. Rhys Davids, Buddhist Birth Stories, Nidana Katha, 200.

153. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, Buddhist Birth Stories, Nidana Katha, 201.

3rd...the jeweled walkway...between the vajrasana and the steadfast gazing.

4th...the jeweled house...NW.

The Tathagata-oudana, which is an eighteenth century Burmese biography, mentions the layout of the seven stations. The first of the four stations corresponds to those mentioned in the Nidana katha and the remaining three include:

5th...Ajapala pagoda...E.

6th...Mucalinda lake...SE.

7th...Rajayatana tree...S of the temple [the current station is at the S of the temple within the compound wall].<sup>154</sup>

#### **E. Analysis of the layout**

A comparison of the directions and the distances of the seven stations at Pegu, Chiangmai and Bodhgaya, reveals that they are generally similar. The directions and, more importantly, the distances of the second station 'Animisa' and of the seventh station 'Rajayatana' match in all three temples. Also, the location of the third station is the same at Bodhgaya and at Pegu. The directions of all seven stations seem to match in all three of the

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<sup>154</sup>. Donald M. Stadner, "King Dhammaceti's Pegu," Orientations 21, pt. 2, p. 56.



temples.

There is an explanation in the legendary history of Lower Burma of the reason why the seven stations symbols appeared again at Shwegugyi temple in Pegu and the Wat Cet Yot in Chiangmai. In the seventh week after the enlightenment, when the Buddha was enjoying the emancipation under the Rajayana tree, two traveling merchants whose names were Tapassu and Bhalluka, passed by and donated food to the Buddha and the Buddha presented them with strands of his hair. In the Mon country, it is said that these two merchants were from Lower Burma and brought the Buddha's hair back with them. These two merchants are not only the first ones to donate the food but are also considered to be the 'first lay disciples of the Buddha' and the strands of the Buddha's hair together are considered to be the first relic that became an object of worship. This 'strands of hair' relic is believed to have been donated to Shwedagon pagoda in Rangoon. Thus, it became a special religious link between the Buddha and the Mons in Lower Burma through the seven stations. Later, the Mon king, Dhammacetti, and the Chiangmai king, Tiloka, were motivated to construct the structures that commemorate the seven stations.

The chronicles suggest an additional reason. The king of Sukhothai, Lu Tai (1347-1375), is said to have been obsessed with the old prophecy, "the doctrine would last only 5000 years. The 2000th year of the parinirvana would witness the next major decline in the religion." The 2000th year of parinirvana was 1462 A.D. which was the time of the reigns of Dhammacetti and Tiloka. It is

possible that these two kings could not have ignored the existence of this prophecy or the rise of a new sect based on the new Sri Lankan ordination. Thus, these two kings desperately needed some way to brush off the old prophecy. It seems logical that these two kings built the Mahabodhi temple replicas with the seven stations symbolism in order to help Tiloka and Dhammacetti to gain religious legitimacy as purifiers of the religion, and for them to perhaps prevent the decline in religion by purifying it.

Further, as evidence that these kings took the threat of religious decline seriously and perhaps believed in the prophecy as well, we have additional evidence of repurification beyond the construction of the Mahabodhi temple replicas in both Pegu and Chiengmai. Tiloka, for example, also felt that it was necessary to summon and sponsor at Chiengmai the Eighth Buddhist Council, inviting over one hundred monks to the Wat Cet Yot to perform the work of purifying the scriptures and making them conform exactly with the Buddhavacana. Thus, as I have attempted to demonstrate in this thesis, the mid-fifteenth century was a very active time in Lower Burma's and Chiengmai's religious developments for a variety of religious reasons, and, as I have explained in previous sections, growing trade in the fifteenth century and the spread of new sects and ideas of what orthodox Theravada Buddhism was allowed them to do this. The symbolism of the seven stations, again, was a very important part of these developments.

**Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, I have examined some of the uniqueness of the Mahabodhi replicas built at Pagan, Pegu, and Chiengmai. The seven stations were an essential part of the temple arrangement, and this indicates a special relationship between the Mahabodhi replicas within this area of mainland Southeast Asia. As I have suggested, I think that while growing international trade helped to spread ideas of orthodox Buddhism and the proper legitimation of kingship, growing domestic trade and other contacts within this area of mainland Southeast Asia probably spread a more specific theme of Theravada Buddhism focussed more directly on the importance of the seven stations' symbolism.

## CONCLUSION

I think that the most significant factor in the adoption of Mahabodhi replicas and the repurification of the *sangha* in late fifteenth century Chiengmai and Pegu was international trade. As political capitals and the chief centers of religious patronage as well as trade centers, the links that Chiengmai and Pegu had with international trade also brought ideas for rulers and monks. The religious reform and the building of Mahabodhi replicas of the late fifteenth century in Pegu and in Chiengmai came from two directions. First, maritime trade routes brought ideas that strengthened the view that reordination in Sri Lanka was the way for one sect to prove its purity over rival sects. Second, regional trade routes within the Burmese region which brought travelling Buddhist monks who went from Chieng Mai to Pagan and from Pegu to Pagan probably created local expectations in the capitals (as trade centers) that, since religious reform in Pagan came after a mission was sent to Sri Lanka and Pagan as a Buddhist center which had a Mahabodhi temple, religious reform in Pegu or Chiengmai should also include a replica temple of the Mahabodhi temple.

The monks who took advantage of these ideas won the support of several kings (Dhammacetti and Tilokaraja) who had more resources than their predecessors and more control over their kingdoms and who could make the selection of a particular sect and the significance of the religious purification more important throughout the kingdom. Last, to reinforce their image as

*dharmarajas* who unified and purified the *sangha*, and as *cakravartins*, Dhammacetti and Tilokara each tried to replace Pagan with their own capitals as the chief center of Buddhism by purifying the religion and by building a Mahabodhi temple.

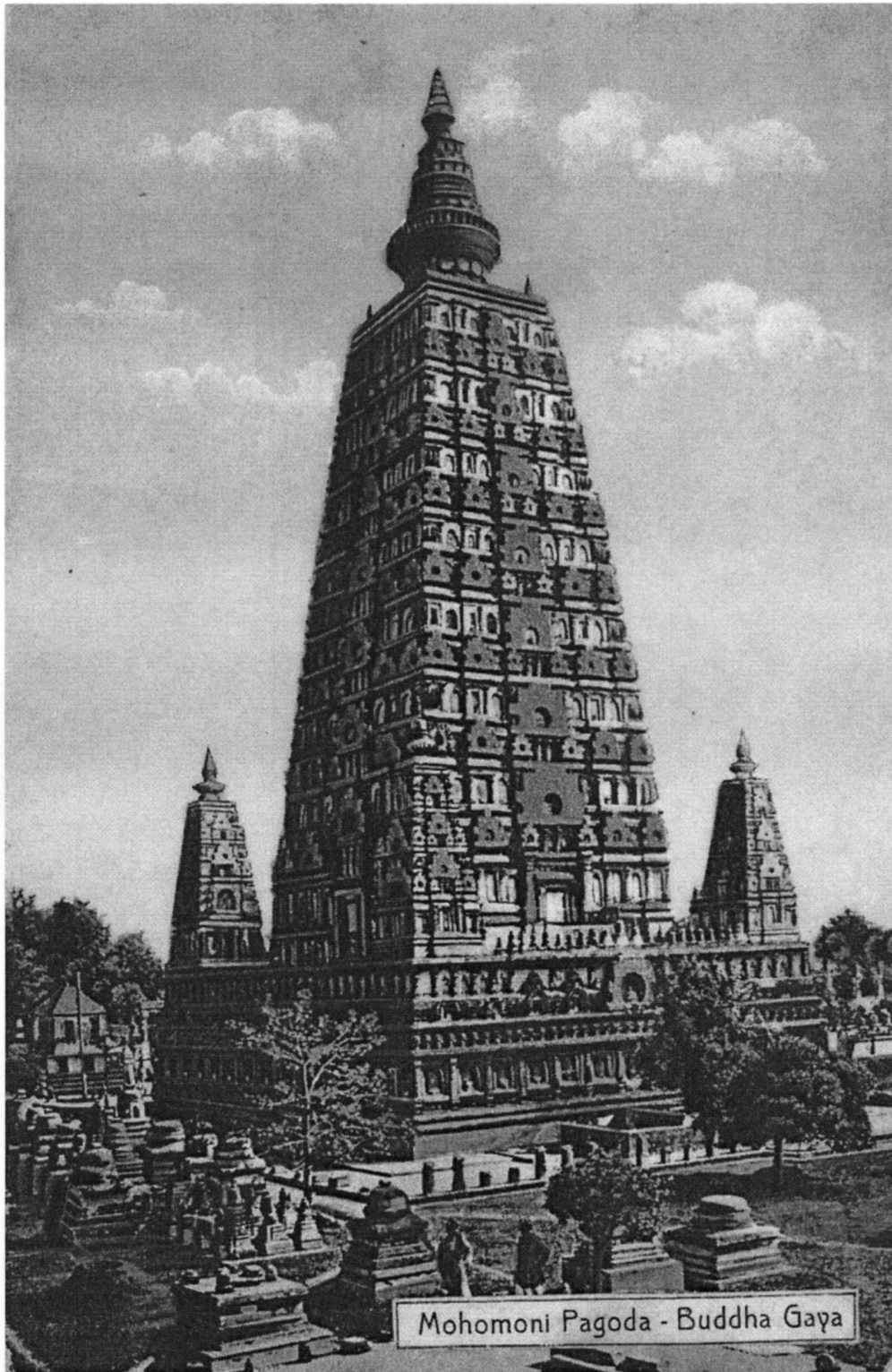
Appendix I: Photograph of the ambulatory of the Shwegugyi temple at Pegu after modern restoration, view from the top of the temple (Photo by Mike Charney).



Appendix II: Photograph of the Shwegugyi Temple at Pegu, author to the lower right (photo by Mike Charney).

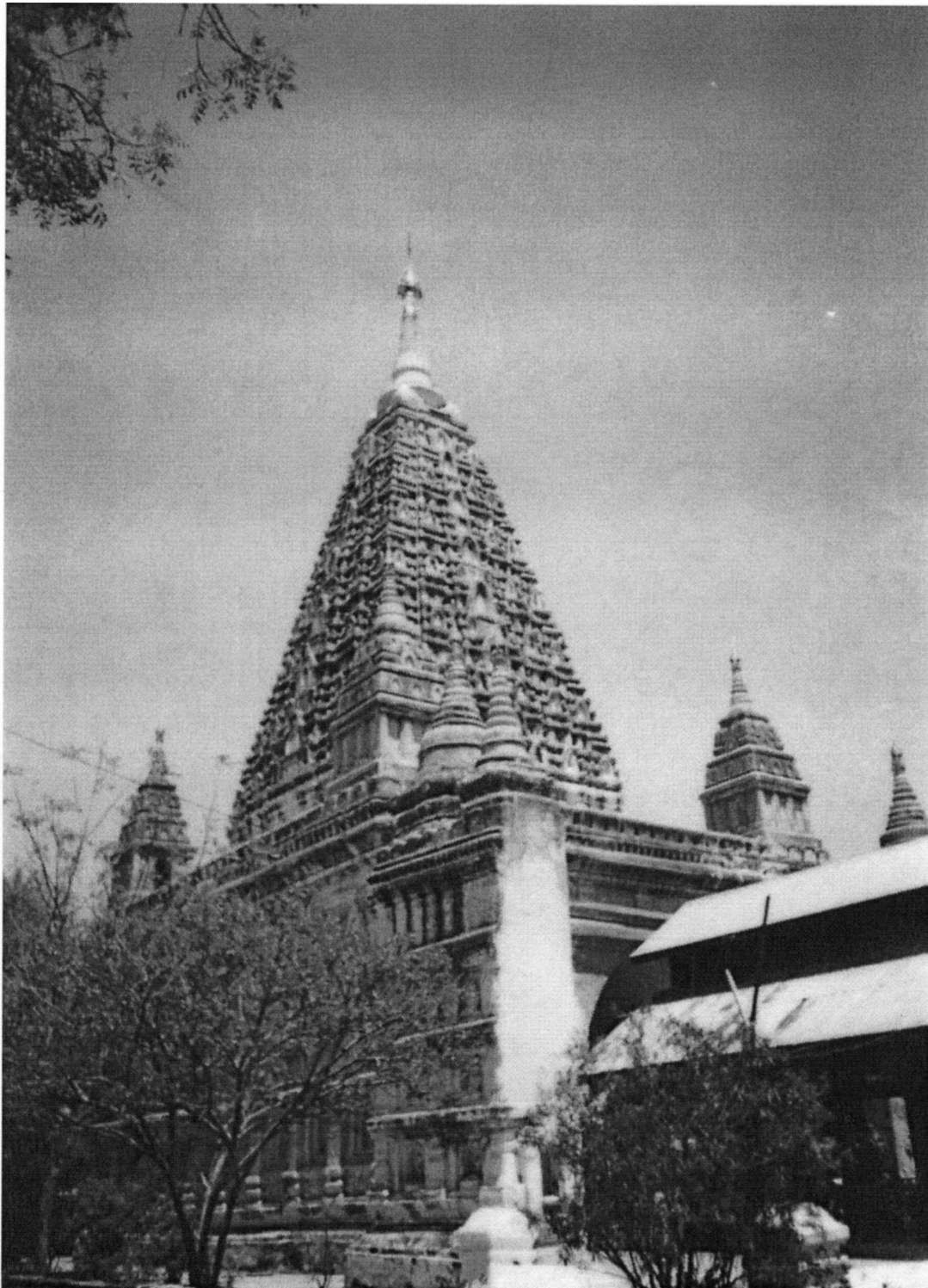


Appendix III: Postcard of the Mahabodhi Temple at Bodhgaya circa 1910 by D.A. Ahuja (from author's collection).

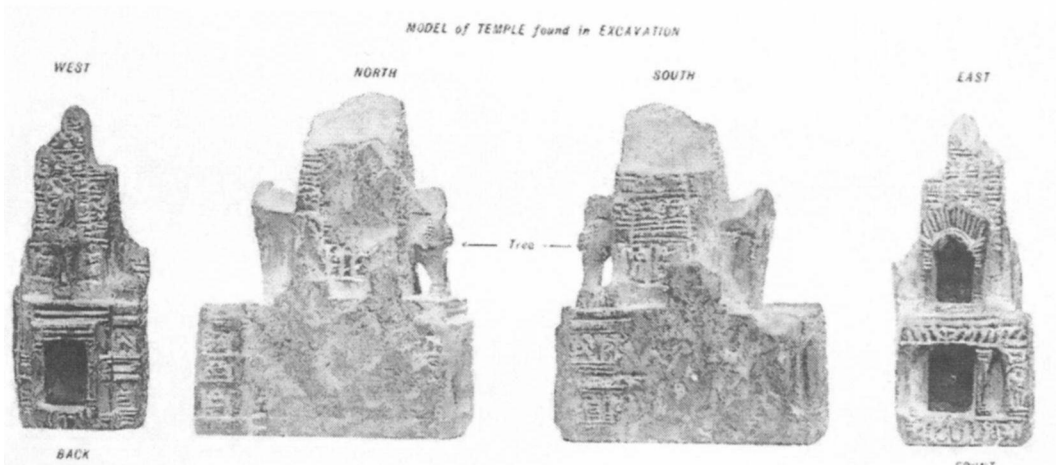




Appendix IV: Photograph of the Mahabodhi Temple at Pagan by author.



Appendix V: Model of Mahabodhi from Cunningham 1880 Plate xvi.



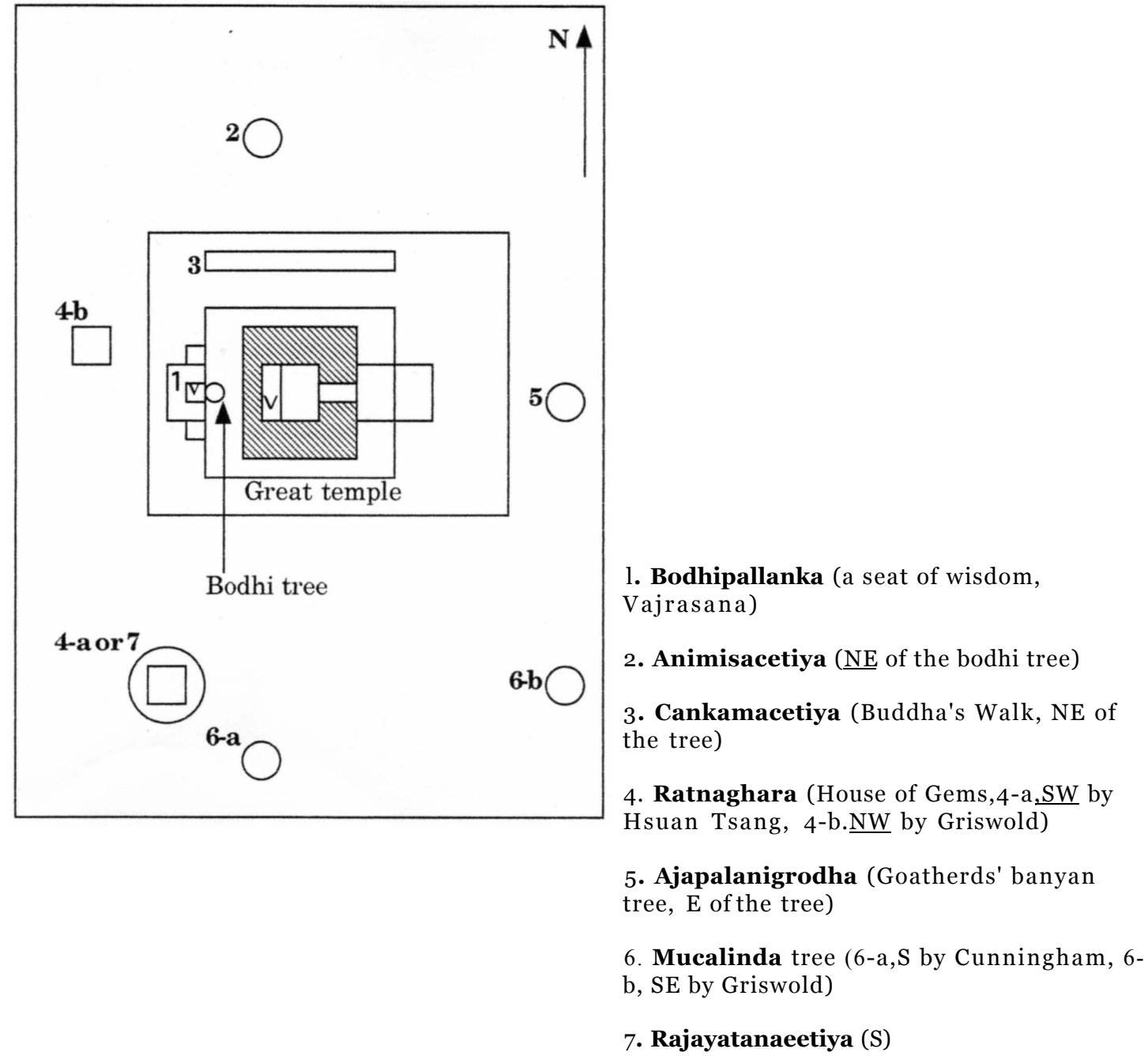
Appendix VI: Photograph of the Buddha images placed on the lower storey of the Mahabodhi Temple at Pagan by author.



Appendix VII: Burmese plaque showing the seven stations at the Mahabodhi Temple at Pagan (photo by author).



Appendix VIII: The directions of the seven stations, Mahabodhi temple at Bodhgaya



Based on Cunningham 1880 plate xviii.

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